



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

School of Veterinary Medicine
& Biomedical Sciences



Professional Student Handbook

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1. Introduction

As part of Texas A&M University, the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (SVMBS) operates in accordance with general University regulations as published in *Texas A&M University Student Rules*. However, not all of the regulations which govern student conduct and student activities in the University are appropriate to students enrolled in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. Candidates for the D.V.M. degree are classified as "**professional students**" and are subject to requirements of a well-defined curriculum that is administered by the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. Additionally, the students must adhere to behavioral and professional standards and ethics that are imposed through professional accreditation and licensure authority.

Consequently, the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences has been authorized by the University administration to establish additional rules and regulations concerning academic, disciplinary, and student life areas within the School, on university premises and/or at school or university sponsored activities, and situations that occur off of university premises (refer to Student Honor Code section of this handbook).

Rules and regulations of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences that differ from or expand on those of the University are set forth in this document as an addendum to the *Texas A&M University Regulations* for evaluation, advancement, and discipline for students pursuing a D.V.M. degree. All other Texas A&M University rules and regulations, where applicable, govern the conduct, rights and responsibilities of students currently enrolled in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. In the event of conflict between Texas A&M University Regulations and the Professional Student Handbook, the Handbook will be the controlling standard.

The rules, regulations and policies contained in this publication pertain only to students enrolled in the professional curriculum leading to the D.V.M. degree in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.

“The terms and conditions contained in this handbook do not constitute a contract between the university and the student. The guidelines set forth do not create any rights greater than those existing under current state and federal law. The information contained herein is subject to change without notice to the student.”

Approved by the SVMBS Deans & Department Heads Committee: August, 2014 Reviewed by University Counsel: August, 2013.

It is in the spirit and tradition of the "Aggie Code of Honor" and the "Veterinarian's Oath" that these regulations are set forth to govern certain aspects of the students' life while enrolled in the professional program in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences at Texas A&M University.

1.1 Aggie Code of Honor

"Aggies do not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do."

The Aggie Code of Honor is an effort to unify the aims of all A&M men and women toward a high code of ethics and personal dignity. For most, living under this code will be no problem, as it asks nothing of a person that is beyond reason. It calls only for honesty and integrity; characteristics which Aggies have always exemplified.

The Aggie Code of Honor functions as a symbol to all Aggies promoting understanding and loyalty to truth and confidence in each other.

1.2 Veterinarian's Oath

Following commencement and prior to entrance into professional practice, each graduate veterinarian has traditionally taken the "Veterinarian's Oath," which reads as follows:

"Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society, through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health and the advancement of medical knowledge."

"I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics. I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence."

The "Veterinarian's Oath" expresses essential aspects of professionalism involved in the day-to-day practice of the art and science of veterinary medicine.

Professional students are expected to strive to form lifelong habits consistent with the philosophy embodied in the "Veterinarian's Oath."

1.3 Commitment to Diversity

As a major public institution of higher education, Texas A&M University has both an extraordinary opportunity and a special responsibility to create and maintain a climate that affirms diversity of persons as well as diversity of views. Diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence.

A commitment to diversity means a commitment to the inclusion, welcome, and support of individuals from all groups, encompassing the various characteristics of persons in our community. We believe that diversity in all its ramifications (including but not limited to diversity of race, color, sex, socioeconomic status, religion, ethnicity, experience, age, disability, genetic information, talent, educational background, veteran status, sexual orientation and gender identity) coupled with inclusion will breed the excellence we seek through embodying our **Aggie Core Values of excellence, integrity, respect, leadership, loyalty, and selfless service.**

1.4 Title IX and Statement on Harassment and Discrimination

Students should be aware that any form of illegal harassment and any form of illegal discrimination against any individual is inconsistent with the values of the University and this School. Students who believe they have experienced illegal harassment or illegal discrimination are encouraged to contact the office of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

Harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and discrimination, are illegal under federal and state statutes, including but not limited to, Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, and is prohibited by Texas A&M University.

Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities at institutions that receive federal financial assistance.

Sexual harassment, including sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination and is therefore prohibited under Title IX. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or educational performance, or creates an intimidating or hostile work or educational environment.

If you believe you or someone has been subjected to (1) sexual harassment by a University faculty or staff member, student, or TAMU visitor; or (2) any other form of sex-based discrimination under Title IX, you may report such misconduct or file a formal complaint with the Title IX Coordinator or official contacts listed below: If you are victim of sexual assault or sexual violence, or know someone who has been a victim of a sexual assault or sexual violence, you should contact one of the offices above, depending on who the complaint is against (faculty/staff, visitor or student) and you should immediately contact the Texas A&M University Police Department at 979.845.2345.

When a crime is reported, both a Title IX investigation and criminal investigation will occur.

Process and procedures

These procedures address Title IX complaints:

<https://titleix.tamu.edu/about/>

Students:

See: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule47/>

Faculty:

University SAP 08.01.01.M1.01, Investigation and Resolution of Complaints Against Faculty Members for Illegal Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, or Related Retaliation Charges

<https://rulesadmin.tamu.edu/rules/download/08.01.01.M1.01>

University Rule 08.01.01.M1, Civil Rights Compliance

<https://rulesadmin.tamu.edu/rules/download/08.01.01.M1>

Staff:

University SAP 08.01.01.M1.01, Investigation and Resolution of Complaints Against NonFaculty Employees and Unrelated Third Parties for Illegal Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, or Related Retaliation Charges

<https://rulesadmin.tamu.edu/rules/download/08.01.01.M1.01>

University Rule 08.01.01.M1, Civil Rights Compliance

<https://rulesadmin.tamu.edu/rules/download/08.01.01.M1>

1.5 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

Texas A&M University's School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences complies with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the School announces publicly the rules and procedures implementing the act. Additional information is available from the registrar.

Generally, with certain exceptions, the law provides that students and former students have the right to review their records, request explanations concerning them, obtain copies and challenge records that they feel are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate. The challenge procedure includes a full and fair opportunity for the student to present relevant evidence at a hearing. The law also provides that students may waive their right of access to confidential letters of recommendation and may also grant permission to release certain personally identifiable information to unauthorized personnel.

The School can release directory information such as name, address, telephone number, etc. ([See Texas A&M University Student Rules](#)). Students may, however, request that this information be withheld.

Student records for veterinary students are maintained in the Office of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

1.6 Accreditation and COE Suggestion Box

Texas A&M University's School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences is accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) Council on Education. Through the accreditation process, the AVMA/COE

assures that you are receiving a quality education. Your input and thoughts are important to the School and to the COE. If you have any concerns or suggestions regarding the SVM or the DVM degree plan, you may write your concerns and place them anonymously in the locked COE suggestion box located in the student lounge (Grasshopper Room).

2. Attendance

Class attendance is an individual student responsibility, priority, and requirement. Students are required to attend all classes, laboratories, and clinical rotations, and to complete all assignments. Instructors are expected to give adequate notice of the dates on which major tests will be given and assignments will be due. Unannounced quizzes or graded in-class activities are given at the discretion of the instructor. Students may request excused or authorized absences according to the policies and definitions in this Handbook. The instructor is under no obligation to provide an authorized absence or the opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused or unauthorized absence.

2.1 Excused Absences

An excused absence is granted through the Office of the Associate Dean for the DVM program. In order to receive an excused absence, you must notify the **Professional Programs Office** by calling **979-845-3878** or by email (absences@cvm.tamu.edu) as soon as possible. If this is the day of an examination you should notify the Professional Programs Office prior to the examination if at all possible. Notices of excused absences are sent to instructors from the Professional Programs Office via email. *Students in the fourth year must also notify their assigned faculty clinician for the rotation.*

Among the reasons absences are considered excused are those described in the Texas A&M University Student Rules listed below:

- Personal illness or injury that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class. **(Documentation from a physician will be required for missing a course examination or final examination and may be requested by the School for any student absence.)** Students who furnish false information may be found in violation of Student Rule 24.4.1. and the Aggie Honor Code. Graded events (examinations, quizzes, etc., should be made-up as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor within 48 hours of the missed event to schedule a make-up. If an instructor has a regularly scheduled make up exam, students are expected to attend unless they have an excused absence. An absence for a non-acute medical service *does not* constitute an excused absence.
- Illness of a dependent family member. An absence for a non-acute medical service *does not* constitute an excused absence.

- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family. Immediate family may include: parents, siblings, grandparents, spouse, child, spouse's child, spouse's parents, spouse's grandparents, step-parents, step-siblings, step-grandparents, grandchild, step-grandchild, legal guardian, and others as deemed appropriate by a faculty member or the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.
- Religious holy day
- Participation in legal proceedings or governmental proceedings that require a student's presence and that cannot be rescheduled.
- Required participation in military duties
- Participation in an activity appearing on the university authorized activity list.

In addition, the following events will be considered for an excused absence if the Professional Programs Office is notified by the individual student **within 2 weeks of starting the semester** in which the trip is planned and the individual student has a minimum cumulative **GPA of 2.5**:

- Scientific presentations at state, national, or international meetings. The absence will require confirmation of meeting registration and signature from the student's mentor.
- Committee meetings for the two senior and junior TVMA student delegates and the TVMF student representative at SWVS and TVMA annual meetings.
- Attendance at national meetings **if required due to the student holding an officer position.**
- Attendance at nationally sponsored events such as CDC Day will be at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and will require confirmation of attendance by the student's mentor.

While the instructor must provide makeup quizzes or tests missed due to an excused absence(s), the SVMBS has no obligation to make any special provisions or repeat laboratory experiences. The student is responsible for all information or exercises that are missed during the absence.

2.2 Authorized Absences

A student may request up to **seven (7) authorized absences** per academic year (reasons other than those listed for excused absences) from a class. **Authorized absences, unlike excused absences, are not approved through the Associate Dean's Office.** You must seek the **permission of the individual instructor(s)** teaching on the days requested **at least 10 business days in advance** of the day of the requested absence and acquire appropriate signatures on the authorized absence forms. No group absence requests will be allowed. After forms are signed by the instructor, they must be turned in to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs Office.

If circumstances arise that require a student to need additional authorized days, beyond the allotted 7 days, the student must gain permission for additional day(s) from the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

The instructor may refuse to permit an authorized absence. If the instructor permits the authorized absence, the instructor must provide makeup quizzes or tests. The student is responsible for all information or exercises that are missed during the absence and the SVM has no obligation to make any special provisions or repeat laboratory experiences.

2.3 Extended Absence

Excused absences of a student, for any reason, for **30 or more consecutive calendar days or 30 percent or more of any course**, whichever is less, during any phase of the professional program will constitute withdrawal and the student must petition for readmission into the professional program. Exceptions to this policy may be granted for fourth year students by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. Excused absences resulting in the student missing a substantial amount of course material, but less than 30 consecutive calendar days or less than 30 percent of any course will be handled by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

2.4 Attendance for 4VM Clinical Assignments

- During the fourth year of the professional program, students are assigned on a rotational basis to the various clinical and diagnostic services of the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital.
- Emergency and intensive care veterinary services are offered to the public on a twenty-four-hour basis seven days a week.
- Student assignments in the clinical rotations are very time demanding, requiring time at night, on weekends, and on holidays for the delivery of patient care.
- Students are held totally responsible for their assigned rotation or block duties, regardless of the time and day of the week.
- Non-compliance with these educational functions may, at the discretion of the faculty member in charge of the clinical course, result in the recording of an unsatisfactory grade.
- Students are reminded that working in the clinical setting may be associated with a variety of hazards, including, but not limited to, injuries due to animal handling and/or equipment, environmental hazards, and infections. It is **STRONGLY** recommended that students carry health insurance. The University does not cover injuries that occur during activities on clinical rotations.
- During clinical rotations, including emergency duty assignments, poor performance and/or unprofessional behavior may result in lowering of the rotation grade and/or repetition of the rotation. Unprofessional behavior can include poor patient care, inadequate client communication, lack of collegial behavior, and other issues listed throughout the Professional Student Handbook.

- Fourth-year students requesting either an excused or authorized absence must complete the [4VM Absence Request Form](#) and obtain all required signatures.

2.5 Absences during Intersemester Break

There will be **no authorized absences** allowed for students in VMID 989 (Clinical Experience) during the intersemester breaks, including Spring Break. Excused absences may be issued on a case by case basis in the event of a major illness, doctor appointments, death in the family, or any other absences listed in the excused absence category. In the event of an emergency, you should contact the clinician on duty as soon as possible.

Poor performance and unprofessional behavior during your intersemester break rotation, including failure to report for duty and the inability to contact you if needed, **will result in the lowering of your grade by one letter**. Missed duties will be made up on a 2-for-1 basis.

2.6 Policy for Students Attending the Southwest Veterinary Medical Symposium and/or Texas Veterinary Medical Association Meeting

2.6.1 *Southwest Veterinary Medical Symposium in the Fall Semester*

Location: This meeting will be held annually in the Fall. Location to be announced annually.

Fourth-Year Students: Students who serve on and will be attending TVMA committee meetings must request and receive an **Authorized Absence** from their assigned clinical faculty member ten **(10) days in advance** and be **pre-registered** through the TVMA Office for the meeting.

Other Students: Students in the first, second and third year classes may attend the Symposium **on Saturday and Sunday with no Authorized Absence** being required. Students who serve on a TVMA committee and who will be attending the committee meetings and/or the Symposium on weekdays must request and receive an **Authorized Absence** from all of their instructors ten **(10) days in advance** and be **preregistered** for the meeting through the TVMA Office.

2.6.2 *Texas Veterinary Medical Association Meeting in the Spring Semester*

Location: This meeting will alternate locations each February.

All Students: When the meeting is in College Station, students may attend on Saturday and Sunday as time allows and as clinical patient responsibilities allow for fourth-year students. However, fourth-year students must work with their assigned clinical faculty for any release from their clinical responsibilities and patients which come first. Students who wish to attend TVMA committee meetings on weekdays must request and receive an **Authorized Absence ten (10) days in advance** and be **pre-registered** for the meeting through the TVMA Office. Students that do not have Friday afternoon classes will not be required to

have an **Authorized Absence**. When the meeting is in a location other than College Station, **all students** will be required to have an **Authorized Absence** by all of their instructors if missing any class on any portion of a weekday and from the assigned clinicians for all fourth-year students ten **(10) days in advance** of the meeting and be **pre-registered** through the TVMA Office. Fourth-year students may attend if they have an approved **Authorized Absence** and can work out the schedule with their assigned clinical faculty and rotation group of students for VMTH clinical services and assigned patients.

Note: The TVMA office will provide the Dean's Office with a list of registered students and students will be required to submit proof of attendance. The Dean's Office will attempt to schedule major examinations away from these in coordination with the course instructors.

2.7 Health Concerns Related to Attendance

2.7.1 *Pregnancy Policy*

The potential for human injury always exists in the practice of veterinary medicine, and it increases whenever an involved person is pregnant. Undoubtedly the greatest hazards are accidents that can occur while working with animal patients that might cause physical trauma to the pregnant woman and/or her unborn child. Added hazards exist through exposure to toxic drugs, infectious agents, inhalation anesthetics, radiation and other agents.

Any pregnant students, or students planning to become pregnant, should consult with their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their needs to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs as soon as possible in order for risk-reduction to begin when it can be most effective, and to determine if additional reasonable accommodations are necessary. While the school cannot mandate the student to notify the school she is pregnant or planning to become pregnant, the school ***strongly recommends*** students provide notification so appropriate steps can be taken to insure the health of both parent and child. To communicate health circumstances or to request additional information, please contact the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, ***Dr. Karen Cornell, at 979-845-3878, or KCornell@cvm.tamu.edu***.

2.7.2 *Policy for Immunocompromised Students*

The potential for human injury and illness always exists in the practice of veterinary medicine, and it may increase when an individual is immunocompromised. When working with animals, there are many infectious disease hazards that could increase the risk of infection for an individual with a compromised immune system. Conditions or treatments that may suppress the immune response include, but not limited to:

HIV/AIDS infections, diabetes mellitus, absence of a spleen, pregnancy, certain malignancies, congenital abnormalities, corticosteroids, chemotherapeutic agents, and immunosuppressive drugs (*NASPHV Compendium of Veterinary Standard Precautions*, JAVMA, 2008;233(3):415432). The student may be in contact with high-risk animals throughout the professional curriculum, including animals at the shelter in Correlates and senior rotations, and through extracurricular activities such as clubs and wet labs. In addition, the culture and observation of infectious agents is part of the practical portion of the microbiology teaching laboratory.

- a. It is the student's responsibility to self-report and inform the Professional Programs Office and the instructor(s) associated with their assigned class or rotation regarding their immunocompromised status in order to receive appropriate accommodation.
- b. The student must work with their physician to develop a plan for preventing zoonotic infections that they may be at risk of developing due to their specific condition. This plan should include primary responsibility for self-protection during animal contact with adequate personal hygiene and personal protective equipment where needed.
- c. Appropriate accommodation and consideration to minimize the risk of infection should be expected by the immunocompromised student. At the same time, the student will be expected to complete each and every requirement of the veterinary curriculum by a schedule or plan that can be implemented and by which the risks are deemed assumable by their physician.
- d. Individual course syllabi may add specific laboratory safety practices, including special precautions to minimize the risk of infection of immunocompromised students.
- e. The student may continue through the curriculum with some schedule and assignment changes. This option will be dependent upon meeting the recommendations of the student's physician, ability to alter the clinical schedule, and meeting the core curricular requirements for graduation. These conditions will be set by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.
- f. If necessary, the student may temporarily withdraw and be readmitted when their medical condition permits completion of assigned classes and rotations. The conditions of readmission are set by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

Note: there are published infection control protocols in the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. The infection control officer is responsible for compliance prevention measures, and reporting of events related to infectious diseases and animal bites within the hospital.

2.7.3 Policy on Student Insurance

Due to the nature of activities in the veterinary profession, all students should maintain health coverage. Insurance coverage will be at the students' own expense. All students are eligible for care at the University Health Center under certain guidelines and restrictions. These medical services are described in the Texas A&M University Undergraduate Catalog.

All current students who have paid the Student Health Center fee are entitled to receive services at the A.P. Beutel Health Center. Included are unlimited visits to the Health Center physicians, basic laboratory tests, physical therapy, consultation with certain medical specialists or health educators, and educational programming and resources. All new students are required to submit a completed medical history form, including documentation of required immunizations. Any charges for medical treatment off campus are the responsibility of the student. To supplement the services provided by the Health Center, students are strongly encouraged to carry a Sickness and Accident Insurance Policy.

Students should arrange health insurance through any carrier. The following are available if the student does not have coverage:

- Sickness and accident insurance policy available through an independent carrier is available through the University.
- In the event that a student becomes ill or is injured during activities that are a part of their academic programs, he/she will be responsible for any expenses.

2.8 On Campus Emergency Procedures

What Should You Do In An Emergency? * *per TAMU website:*

<https://www.tamu.edu/emergency/>

- Be aware of your surroundings. Being aware of where you are and what is happening around you can help you to understand how information, events, and your own actions will impact your safety and your ability to protect yourself, both now and in the near future.
- Protect Yourself. Based upon your assessment of the situation, use your best judgment to protect yourself and, if possible, others.
- Call for help. Any emergency service can be summoned by calling 911 or 9-911 if using a campus phone.
- Help Others. Once you are safely away from the danger, warn others of the hazard and help if you can without putting yourself in danger.
- Provide basic first aid if possible/appropriate until emergency care arrives
- Assist student with transport to the University Health Center.

- Notify the Office of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs of occurrence as soon as possible, 845-3878.
- After the injured student returns, she/he should fill out an DVM/TAMU Accident Report in the Dean's Office or the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital Administration Office (within twenty-four (24) hours).

Note: If the student is an employee of the School, and is injured while on the job, she/he is eligible for workmen's compensation. The injury must occur during the employment period and within the scope of employment. This does not include injuries occurring during a clinical rotation as part of the curriculum.

2.9 Off Campus Emergency Procedures

- Provide first-aid.
- If feasible (not an emergency) return to Texas A&M University campus and take the student to the University Health Center.
- If it is not possible to return to the Texas A&M University campus, transport the student to nearest medical facility for treatment.
- Call a local ambulance if necessary, #911.
- Notify the Office of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs of occurrence as soon as possible, 845-3878.
- After the injured student returns, she/he should fill out an DVM/TAMU Accident Report in the Dean's Office or the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital Administration Office (within twenty-four (24) hours).

Note: Even if the student has no medical insurance coverage, the hospital is still required to provide care. If it is a private hospital, they may choose to provide emergency care then transport the patient to another public facility.

3. Academic Regulations

3.1 Academic Definitions

Various words, phrases, and concepts are defined at the beginning of this section to ensure unambiguous communication.

3.1.1 Admission

Admission to the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences is a process over which the SVMBS Selections Committee has responsibility. This process includes submission of specific forms, details, and requirements by published deadlines that can be obtained from the Dean's Office of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.

3.1.2 Apply for Admission

To apply for admission means that the SVMBS Selections Committee process and procedures have been invoked. A person who has never been a student in the veterinary medical program applies for admission, invoking the policies and procedures that govern the operation of the Selections Committee. Each application for admission to the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences is a new application, even for individuals who apply more than one time to the program.

3.1.3 Reapply for Admission

Once a student has been accepted for matriculation in the professional veterinary medical program, there are some circumstances under which, having been dismissed, a student would be eligible to be considered for reentry into the program. This includes students dismissed for academic insufficiency after their first semester in the professional program and those denied readmission following a dismissal after a later term. Such students would have to reapply for admission through the standard admissions process, thereby invoking the policies and procedures of the selection process of the School.

3.1.4 Appeal for Readmission

There are some circumstances under which a student, having once been dismissed from the professional veterinary medical program, may desire to reenter the program. For those students who appeal for readmission following academic dismissal, the appeal will be reviewed by the SVMBS Academic Progress Committee for the academic year in which they were dismissed. The student must file a written request of the intent to appeal for readmission with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within ten business days after notification of his/her dismissal. The SVMBS Selections Committee has no role during the readmission process.

3.1.5 Grade Reports

The terms grade point average (GPA) and grade point ratio (GPR) are used synonymously throughout this document.

3.2 Graduation Requirements

1. Completion of all required coursework.
2. Minimum cumulative GPR of 2.0
3. Successful completion of any required remediations.
4. Meeting the conditions set forth by the Progress Committees for any readmissions.

3.3 Academic Committees

The primary academic committees of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences are the SVMBS Academic Progress Committees. These committees oversee students' academic performance, assess their progress, and recommend consequences for all academic deficiencies. Each committee meets at least twice each semester.

3.3.1 *Academic Progress Committees I, II, and III*

Three Academic Progress Committees oversee the first three years of the professional veterinary medical program. Each committee consists of all course coordinators within its specific year in the professional veterinary medical program. These committees report to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, who is a non-voting member of each Academic Progress Committee.

3.3.2 *Academic Progress Committee IV*

This committee oversees the fourth or clinical year of the curriculum. It also reports to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. The Academic Progress Committee IV consists of eight (8) members of the faculty. Three (3) members will be selected from VSCS, three (3) from VLCS, and two (2) from VTPB. The Associate Dean for Professional Programs is a non-voting member of this committee.

3.3.3 *Other Committees*

a. *School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences Academic Appeals Committee*

The Academic Appeals Committee is composed of one (1) faculty member from each academic department for rotating three-year terms. The committee serves as an appeals panel to hear matters relating to academic decisions, grade assignment disputes, and administrative academic decisions by the Associate Dean.

b. *School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee is composed of the Dean, Associate Deans, Department Heads, Chief of Staff, and the Assistant Dean for Finance. This is the policy-making group of the School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Academic matters may also be placed before the committee.

3.4 Grading

A student's course grade is based upon performance and participation in class or clinical rotation, laboratory work, examinations, and other activities as may be applicable to that course. Class and laboratory attendance may be a part of the grade. In some courses, part of the grade may be subjective evaluation. The

proportionate weight assigned to each factor shall be determined by the course instructor(s) administering the course. The basis for all grades will be distributed to all students in the syllabus or equivalent document during the first week of class. Additionally, course policies relating to reexamination will be distributed at the beginning of each course.

Grade Scale

A - (90-100) Excellent, 4 grade points per credit hour

B - (80-89.99) Good, 3 grade points per credit hour

C - (70-79.99) Satisfactory, 2 grade points per credit hour

D - (65 - 69.99) Passing but below expected performance, 1 grade point per credit hour (limited number permitted, section 3.8.2)

F - Failure (below 65), no grade points (limited number permitted, section 3.8.2)

I - Incomplete, no grade points

X - No grade submitted, no grade points

S - Satisfactory

U - Unsatisfactory (Calculated as F in cumulative GPA and included in the permitted number of Ds and Fs)

W - Assigned when student withdraws from all courses during the period.

1. Grades of A, B, C, D, and S are passing grades, although only a limited number of D grades are permitted.
2. An S grade will not be included in the computation of a student's cumulative GPR, but a U grade will be computed as if it were an F.
3. When a student repeats or remediates a course in the DVM program, grades for the original course and its replacement are both used by the University and the School to compute the GPR and are recorded on the student's transcript.
4. A temporary grade of "I" indicates that the student has completed a course with the exception of a major examination or other requirement. This grade is given primarily when the deficiency is due to excused/authorized absences. A memorandum containing the following information is submitted to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs:
 - a. a statement of the basis for recording the incomplete grade; and
 - b. a statement defining the remaining work to be completed. The work must be completed prior to the end of the next academic term in which the student is registered, unless the Associate Dean for Professional Programs grants an extension of time for good reason. If the work is not completed within this period, or if the student registers for the same

course again, the “I” is changed to an F by the Registrar. Students must clear all “I” grades prior to advancement into the fourth or clinical year of the professional curriculum and prior to graduation.

5. A grade of “X” is assigned by the Registrar when a grade is not submitted by the instructor. The instructor will have 30 days from the beginning of the next semester or summer term to submit a grade (via Grade Change Report). If a Grade Change Report is not submitted during this time, a grade of F will be assigned by the Registrar.

3.5 Examination Schedule

1. A two (2) hour final examination may be given in each 2-6 credit hour course. Final examinations in one (1) credit hour courses will be one (1) hour exams or practical exams. In team-taught and/or system courses, final examinations may be given at the end of a section within the course. The course coordinator will approve the examination procedure to be used in the course.
2. All major, midterm, and final examinations are to be administered in accordance with the schedule published by the Office of the Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. Provisions for take-home finals will be arranged by individual course coordinators.
 - a. All midterm and final examinations are given within the designated week for the exams. Exceptions will be approved through the examination scheduling process of the Professional Programs Office.
 - b. The scheduling of all examinations is under the authority of the Instructor and the Professional Programs Office. Changes to the examination schedule may be made by the instructor in collaboration of the Professional Programs Office. Students may request a change in the schedule of an examination by acting through the Student-Faculty Representatives, but the Instructor is under no obligation to make a change and has the final authority for a decision.
 - c. Final semester and final examination grades will not be released to students until all final examinations have been completed. When midterm examinations are scheduled during a one-week block, grades for those examinations will not be released to students until all midterm examinations have been completed
3. No examinations shall be given during the week beginning five (5) calendar days prior to the first day of final examinations, except:
 - a. Courses carrying one credit
 - b. Optional tests for special credit
 - c. Make-up tests
 - d. OSCE or laboratory tests

4. Classes are not conducted during the final examination week except those rescheduled by the vote of the class and with Instructor approval, or those rescheduled for unusual circumstances as approved by the Professional Programs Office.

3.6 Make-Up Examinations

1. A make-up examination is to be administered when a student misses an examination due to circumstances that constitute an excused or authorized absence as described in Section 1. The nature of the make-up examination will be solely determined by the course coordinator(s).
2. A make-up examination must be administered and graded so that a final grade is reported within the time period prescribed by the Registrar for that term. However, instructors, at their discretion, have the prerogative of issuing a grade of Incomplete when circumstances warrant such action. The grade of Incomplete must be removed satisfactorily from the student's record in accordance with Section 3.4..
3. The course's make-up examination policy shall be announced at the same time and in the same manner as the grading policy.

3.7 Academic Minimum Standards

3.7.1 *Minimum Cumulative GPR*

Students whose cumulative GPR for courses in the professional curriculum falls below 2.0 will be placed on academic probation (2.VIII.F). Students placed on probation as the result of a cumulative GPR less than 2.0 must improve their GPR to 2.0 in accordance with the terms of their academic probation. A student will not be allowed to matriculate into the clinical (fourth) year with less than a 2.0 cumulative GPR.

3.7.2 *Class and Club Officer and Company Representative Minimum Standards*

In order to be eligible to serve as a class or club officer or as a company representative, a student must have a minimum cumulative GPR of 2.5. While acting as a class and/or club officer or company representative, the student must continue to maintain a cumulative and semester GPR of 2.5.

3.7.3 *Academic Minimum Standards*

Academic standards apply to those grades earned in courses that are part of the professional veterinary curriculum.

- a. Academic good standing is defined as achieving the program's academic expectations by maintaining a **minimum cumulative GPR of 2.0 and not being on academic probation.**

- b. Each student is expected to achieve a **2.0 GPR (grade of C) or better in each course** in the professional curriculum. See section 3.8.2 for limitations on D and F grades.
- c. Each student is expected to achieve a **2.0 GPR or better in each semester** of the curriculum. Students whose GPR falls below 2.0 in a specific semester will be placed on academic probation as warning.
- d. Each student must have achieved a **cumulative GPR of 2.0 or better for advancement into the fourth or clinical year**. If a cumulative GPR of 2.0 is not achieved by this time, the student will not be considered to have cleared academic probation and will be automatically dismissed from the program.
- e. A minimum cumulative GPR of 2.0 in the professional veterinary medical curriculum is required for graduation with a DVM degree.
- f. A student ***will not be allowed to graduate with unremediated F grades***; this includes grades in all professional veterinary medical courses (900 level) attempted, including electives and all clinical rotations.
- g. The semester and cumulative GPR are computed by using all courses completed in the professional veterinary medical curriculum. This includes the original grade of F in a course that subsequently may have been remediated.

3.8 Academic and Professional Deficiencies and Procedures

3.8.1 Academic Deficiencies

A DVM Student is considered below the minimal academic standards for continuation in the program when:

- a. Student's semester GPR falls below a 2.0, resulting in academic probation (section 3.8.6) or;
- b. Student's cumulative grade point ratio is below a 2.0, which will result in academic probation or;
- c. Accumulation of 3Ds, resulting in automatic dismissal (section 3.8.7) or;
- d. Accumulation of 2Fs, resulting in automatic dismissal (section 3.8.7); or
- e. Accumulation of 2Ds and 1F, resulting in automatic dismissal (section 3.8.7).

3.8.2 Accumulation of Ds and/or Fs

A limited number of D and F grades are allowed in the program. The consequences of accumulating such grades are serious.

- a. Students earning a grade of one (1) D or one (1) F will be given an official academic probationary warning by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs indicating unsatisfactory performance. All F grades must be remediated (section 3.8.8).
- b. Students who earn a second grade of F will be automatically dismissed from the curriculum.
- c. Students who earn a second D grade will be receive a letter from the Associate Dean for Professional Programs stating that the accumulation of an additional D or F in any course will lead to automatic dismissal, regardless of their cumulative GPR.
- d. Students who earn a third grade of D will be automatically dismissed from the curriculum.

3.8.3 *Unsatisfactory Performance and Procedures - Academic*

- a. Students whose scholastic progress is unsatisfactory will be subject to:
 - i. probation (section 3.8.6); and/or,
 - ii. remediation (section 3.8.8 and section 3.8.9) or,
 - iii. dismissal (section 3.8.7).
- b. The Academic Progress Committees will monitor students' academic progress during the term and will forward this information to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, who will transmit appropriate warnings or actions to the students.
 - i. At the end of each semester, the Academic Progress Committees will review the academic and professional performance of all students and recommend appropriate action, pursuant to the rules set out in this Handbook, to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.
 - ii. The Associate Dean for Professional Programs will notify the students and the appropriate Academic Progress Committees of action taken.
 - iii. Students may appeal for readmission to the appropriate progress committee, unless the dismissal occurs during Semester 1 (section 6.2). The Academic Progress Committee recommends to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs whether to approve or deny requests for readmission.

3.8.4 *Unsatisfactory Performance and Procedures – Professional Behavior*

Definition of Professional Behavior: Attributes, characteristics, and behaviors meeting or exceeding the technical or ethical standards of the profession. Professionals are expected to be rational, well-spoken, and calm under most circumstances, even when others are demonstrating adverse behaviors. Professionals remain committed to their work and behave ethically in all circumstances both on campus and off campus.

Unprofessional behavior can be addressed through the grading process. Failure to conduct oneself with professionalism can result in penalties in the form of a course grade reduction and/or a formal complaint being made to the Student Honor Code Council.

- a. A student's professional behavior can be evaluated based upon attendance and punctuality; ethics; individual effort; and individual participation within their groups.
- b. Should unprofessional behavior be noted, there will be a discussion with the student regarding expectations for professionalism and a written warning will be issued. Subsequent actions can trigger grade consequences.
- c. Up to 10% of the total points accumulated by the student at the end of the semester can be subtracted from the final grade based on the criteria identified above.
- d. Student actions that are considered to be particularly concerning, to include but not limited to conduct that evidences defamation, obscenity, disruption of the academic environment, threat of violence, or sexual or racial harassment, will be subject to greater than 10% reduction in grading and will require additional sanctions through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.
- e. Reported incidents that occur, on campus and off campus or during the times when students are not in class (breaks, summers, etc.), will be handled in the same manner.
- f. The use of electronic devices in the classroom should be limited to activities required for the course. Students must be courteous to colleagues in the classroom; if the use of electronic devices is distracting to others, the actions should be reported to the appropriate faculty member(s). Faculty may have additional statements in their syllabus regarding the use of electronic devices in the classroom and/or laboratory.

3.8.5 *Student Professional Behavior – Off-Campus*

DVM students are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional behavior as stated in the Professional Student Handbook, the Aggie Code of Honor, and the Veterinary Oath. Once admitted to the professional program, exemplary professional behavior is expected of all students. This expectation extends to students participating in all parts of the curriculum, including classes, laboratories, externships, clinical rotations, out-rotations, and study abroad opportunities. In addition, these expectations extend to all times when students are off-campus including summers between the first and second and second and third years of the curriculum, University holidays such as Winter Break and Spring Break, when the students are on academic or disciplinary probation, or on a deferral leave from the curriculum.

Students are considered to be within the professional program if they have been admitted and there is reasonable expectation that they will continue in the program. Approved by EC: 12/23/2014

3.8.6 *Academic Probation*

Academic probation signifies a level of performance that, if continued, will lead to dismissal. Students are placed on academic probation for the purpose of monitoring academic performance, correcting academic deficiencies, and counseling. Students placed on probation will be allowed to continue in the professional program as long as the probationary terms, which are set by the appropriate Progress Committee and the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, are being met. Ultimately, the students must clear probation or be dismissed.

3.8.7 *Automatic Dismissal*

The following situations will result in **automatic** academic dismissal:

- a. Students accumulate any combination of two (2) Ds and one (1) F or three (3) Ds.
- b. Students receive a second grade of F.
- c. Students that have been dismissed for academic deficiencies, and subsequently readmitted, that earn an additional D or F, or do not meet the terms of their academic probation.
- d. Students do not meet the terms of academic probation and do not clear probation (section 3.8.6).
- e. Although not automatic, students may also be dismissed for academic dishonesty or other unprofessional behaviors (section 7.4) through a decision of the Honor Code Council.

3.8.8 *Remediation of Courses in Semesters 1-6*

Remediation is defined as a procedure through which a student makes up work in a failed course while being retained in the program. Remediation requires the registration for credit in a 985/989 course equivalent in credit hours to the failed course. ***The specifications of the remediation are at the sole discretion of the instructor.***

- a. Remediation of course deficiencies will be recommended by the Academic Progress Committees to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. This action is binding on the department in which the deficiency occurred. The instructor shall determine the precise method of remediation.
 - i. The remediation must be successfully completed prior to promotion into the next year.

- ii. A grade of “C” or above must be achieved to meet the requirements of the remediation. If this requirement is not met, the student will be automatically dismissed from the Program.
 - iii. Both the remediation grade, as well as the F in the course that led to the remediation, will be included in calculating the cumulative GPR, and will count toward the accumulation of D or F grades.
 - iv. The remediation will occur through formal enrollment in a course at the time of remediation, a 985/989 directed studies/special topics course, determined by the department in which the deficiency occurred. Customarily, registration for this course occurs in the summer following the year in which the deficiency occurred.
- b. The department will officially inform the Associate Dean for Professional Programs of the remediation agreement and report the results and grade of the remediation in writing.
 - c. All remediations must be completed prior to entry into the fourth or clinical year.**

3.8.9 Remediation of Courses/Rotations in the Fourth (Clinical) Year

- a. Any course/rotation deficiency (grade of F) must be reported to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within three (3) days following the end of the course/rotation. The Academic Progress Committee’s recommendations regarding remediation, if approved by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, is binding on the department in which the deficiency occurred. The remediation:
 - i. shall not replace required rotations or externships.
 - ii. may replace vacation time.
 - iii. may be postponed until the next clinical year cycle after graduation.
 - iv. grade results will count toward the accumulation of D or F grades.
 - v. will occur through enrollment in a course determined by the department.
- b. The department will officially inform the Associate Dean for Professional Programs of results of the remediation in writing.
- c. All remediations of clinical rotations must occur within the same amount of time as the original rotation.
- d. If a passing grade is not achieved the student will be automatically dismissed. The Associate Dean for Professional Programs will refer the case to the Academic Progress Committee IV for its review and recommendation if the student appeals for readmission.

- e. In addition to academic deficiency remediations, students in the clinical year who receive an accumulation of more than one score in any single New Graduate Outcome (NGO) competency in the lowest two scoring categories on the five point scale used for clinical grading will be required to remediate the competency. Remediation will occur under the direction of the faculty member, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, in charge of the rotation in which the second deficiency was reported. The faculty member will report the results of remediation to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

3.8.10 Remediation of an F grade following academic dishonesty

- a. Since the Academic Standards of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences require that remediation of any grade of “F” for academic failure be successfully completed before a student can matriculate to the next year or semester of the professional curriculum, the student receiving the grade of “F” as a sanction for academic dishonesty must successfully remediate the grade of “F” according to the Professional Student Handbook, **section 7.5.3**.
- b. The remediation requirements for a passing grade shall be given in writing to the student by the instructor of the course with a copy to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and the appropriate department head.
- c. Remediation requirements following scholastic dishonesty may include assignments or trainings related to academic integrity and may include modules from the Aggie Honor Code office.

3.8.11 Probation for students readmitted following academic dismissal.

Students readmitted to the program following dismissal for academic reasons will be placed on probation for a minimum of one semester, at the end of which time the terms of their academic probation must have been satisfied.

3.8.12 Academic Grade Appeals

Every student has a right to a course grade that represents the instructor’s good-faith judgment of the student’s academic performance. A lack of good faith must be established by objective proof that a grade was based on **capricious or discriminatory academic evaluation**.

3.8.13 General Grade Appeal Procedures

A student who believes that his or her final grade in a course reflects **capricious or discriminatory academic evaluation** has the right to appeal his/her grades. The procedures for appeal are as follows:

- a. First, discuss the matter with the course coordinator and/or instructor.

- b. If satisfactory resolution is not reached with the course coordinator and/or instructor, the student should **file a written grievance with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs**. This letter should also state which type of appellate option he or she chooses, informal or formal. No written grievance shall be considered unless it is filed **within ten (10) business days* after notification of his/her final grade in a didactic course or rotation** (Fig. 1). The written appeal must address specifically how the grading was **capricious or discriminatory**.
- c. During the entire academic appeal process, the student is not entitled to have an attorney present.
- d. All communication originating from the SVMBS during the appellate process will be directly with the veterinary student, not with an outside party.
- e. A student may choose one of two ways to adjudicate a grievance, either informal or formal. The choice of the student to use one of the following automatically waives the use of the other.

Due to the established calendar for the fourth (clinical) year, students desiring to file a written grievance concerning a grade following semester 6 should do so by Friday of the first week of the fourth year. (This is necessary to expedite the appeal process so that students are not provisionally retained in the fourth year with academic deficiencies.)

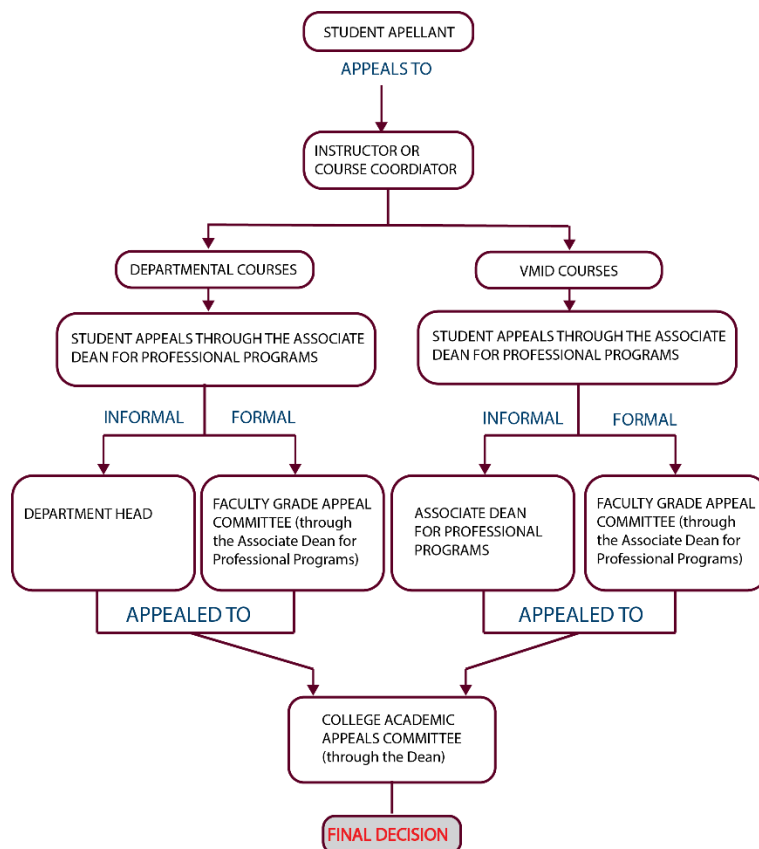


Figure 1: Grade Appeal Procedures

3.8.14 Informal Grade Appeal Process

The student may appeal the final grade to the Department Head, or the Associate Dean for Professional Programs in the case of VMID courses, by following the below procedures:

The grievance may be handled **informally**, upon the student's request, through an interview conducted by the department head in the case of departmental course, or the Associate Dean for Professional Programs in the case of VMID courses. **The student must first file a written grievance with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within ten(10) business days* after notification of his/her final grade**, who will then facilitate a meeting between the student, department head, course coordinator, and instructor(s) involved.

** Due to the established calendar for the fourth (clinical) year, students desiring to file a written grievance concerning a grade following semester 6 should do so by Friday of the first week of the fourth year. (This is necessary to expedite the appeal process so that students are not provisionally retained in the fourth year with academic deficiencies.)*

The instructor and student shall be present, and both shall be allowed to explain fully his or her position and bring witnesses to support his or her

position. The standard for overturning a grade is objective evidence that the grading was ***capricious or discriminatory***.

- a. The Department Head, or Associate Dean for Professional Programs in the case of VMID courses, will make a decision and inform the student in a timely manner.
- b. The decision of the Department Head or Associate Dean is subject to appeal as detailed subsequently in section 3.8.16.

3.8.15 Formal Grade Appeal Process

The grievance may be adjudicated formally, upon student request, through a hearing before a faculty grade appeal committee consisting of faculty members from one or more of the SVMBS departments. The student must first file a **written grievance with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within ten (10) business days* after notification of his/her final grade.**

** Due to the established calendar for the fourth (clinical) year, students desiring to file a written grievance concerning a grade following semester 6 should do so by Friday of the first week of the fourth year. (This is necessary to expedite the appeal process so that students are not provisionally retained in the fourth year with academic deficiencies.)*

- a. The list of witnesses must be provided to the Associate for Professional Programs at least **72 hours prior to the date of the Faculty Grade Appeals Committee meeting.**
- b. The Committee will be appointed by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. The hearing will be moderated by a department head whose faculty are not involved with the appealed grade.
- c. The instructor and student shall be present, and both shall be allowed to bring witnesses to support his or her position. The student must produce objective evidence that the grading was ***capricious or discriminatory***.
- d. The list of witness must be provided to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs at least **72 hours prior** to the date of the Faculty Appeals Committee meeting.
- e. The Appeal Committee may directly question the student, instructors, and witnesses to determine if the grading was ***capricious or discriminatory***. The Appeal Committee may require additional witnesses to appear for questioning if deemed necessary.
- f. The Appeal Committee will notify the student of their decision ***by letter through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.***
- g. The decision of the faculty grade appeal committee is subject to appeal as detailed subsequently in section 3.8.16.

3.8.16 *Appeal of the results of an Informal or Formal Grade Appeals Procedure to the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee*

The student may appeal the decision, of the department head or Associate Dean for Professional Programs in the situation of a VMID course, of an informal grade appeal or the grade appeal decision of the Faculty Grade Appeal Committee in the situation of a formal appeal, to the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee relative to the assignment of grades.

The student may appeal the decision related to an informal grade appeal or formal grade appeal by notifying the Dean of the School in writing **within ten (10) business days of notification**. Upon such notice, the Dean will convene the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee, the members of which shall not have been participants in the course in question or members of the department in which the grade was earned, to the petition. **If members of the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee do not meet these requirements, the Dean may assign substitute faculty members that do meet the requirements.**

- a. The School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee shall have the right to call before them witnesses or persons having information relevant to the appeal.
- b. The student and instructor shall be allowed to explain fully his or her position to the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee and bring witnesses to support his or her position.
- c. The list of witnesses must be provided to the Dean at least **72 hours** prior to the date of the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee meeting.
- d. The standard remains that the student must provide objective evidence that the *grade was capricious or discriminatory*.
- e. The chairperson of the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee shall thereafter communicate the committee's findings and recommendations to the Dean. **The decision of the School of Veterinary Medicine Academic Appeals Committee will be final.**

3.9 **First Professional Academic Appeals Panel and Process**

The First Professional Appeals Panel (FPAP) will hear appeals regarding allegations of due process violations only, after all administrative processes related to (a) suspensions, dismissals, or blocks for scholastic deficiency in a student's academic program; and (b) appeals of disputes over final course grades have been exhausted in first professional programs (JD, MD, DDS, DVM, PharmD).

This process allows a student an appeal at the university level, that is, beyond the first professional program regarding allegations of material due process violations

only. This appeal will consist of a review of the file or files pertaining to the student's complaint and any information submitted by the student to support their appeal. There will be no witnesses at the appeal (although at the sole discretion of the Chair, the student or the respondent may be asked to provide information or to answer clarifying questions to assist the panel in their decision making). The only two possible outcomes in the First Professional Appeals Panel (FPAP) hearing are: 1) a finding that there was no material defect in due process and therefore the appealed decision is affirmed, or 2) a finding that there was a material defect in due process and therefore the case is remanded back to the professional school to repair the due process defect and to render a decision.

[Texas A&M University Student Rules Part III, Section 62](#) describe the First Professional Appeals Panel Process in detail.

4. Accommodations Request Process

The School recognizes the Americans with Disabilities Act and is committed to seeking reasonable accommodations for qualified students. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.

A student who believes they have a disability that requires special accommodations for any class should first go through Texas A&M University's Department of Disability Resources for documentation of the disability and recommended accommodations (i.e., extra time on tests, quiet room, etc.). If it is determined that the student is eligible for special accommodations, they will receive a report from the Office of Disability Resources that the student should present to each course coordinator. In most cases accommodations will not be given without this report.

Students may contact the Department of Disability Resources at 979-845-1637, or email disability.tamu.edu. Their office is located in the Student Services Bldg., 471 Houston Street, Suite 122.

5. Withdrawal and Deferrals from the Professional Program

Withdrawal from the professional veterinary medical program is the prerogative of every student. The choice of withdrawal should be considered carefully. If a student who withdraws from the DVM program wishes to reenter the program, they must apply and compete for admission through the standard application process.

Deferral from the Professional Program: A student may be allowed to defer from the DVM Program for one year for personal reasons and only with the approval of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. Approval for deferral may or may not be granted, depending on the timing and reason for the requests. **Students will not be allowed a deferral for academic deficiencies.** Students may be allowed to defer from the program for mental and physical reasons

as long as a medical or health professional has certified that the health condition precludes successful progress in the program. A medical or health professional must certify that the student's condition has resolved sufficiently to be readmitted into the program. Additionally, students may be allowed to defer with subsequent readmission for other justifiable and documentable reasons if approved by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

6. Readmission to the Professional Program

Students who have been dismissed for academic reasons may appeal for readmission. Such applications are reviewed by the appropriate Academic Progress Committees.

Students may also apply for admission as a new applicant. In this case, reentry into the program is through the regular selection process that is conducted by the Selections Committee.

6.1 Readmission following Dismissal for Academic Reasons

1. Those who seek readmission to the professional curriculum in veterinary medicine following dismissal for academic reasons must submit a written request for readmission to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within **ten (10) days of notification of dismissal. Any requests received more than ten (10) days following notification of dismissal will not be considered.**
2. The request must include:
 - a. The reason for dismissal or withdrawal.
 - b. The reason for requesting readmission.
 - c. If mental or physical health was a consideration in withdrawal or dismissal, the applicant must include a medical professional's current evaluation of the student's health status. Additional substantiating documents may also be required.
 - d. Transcripts of any college credits completed since last enrolled in the professional curriculum.
3. The request for readmission and the applicant's prior records will be given to the Academic Progress Committees (Fall and Spring Terms) for the program year from which he/she was dismissed. Upon petition, the Progress Committees will carefully examine the applicant's record. A majority vote of committee members is required to recommend readmission.
4. The committee will recommend one of the following to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs:
 - a. **Reinstatement of the student** at the point in the curriculum deemed appropriate and recommend the academic probationary terms to be imposed, if any.
 - i. the reinstatement criterion may be simply retaking the course that led to the dismissal.

- ii. the student may be required to retake other courses in which a passing grade had been achieved, or perform independent study if, in the judgment of the committee, it will be in the best interest of the student.

b. Deny readmission.

5. The Associate Dean for Professional Programs will review each case and affirm the recommendation of the Academic Progress Committee or recommend an alternate course of action to **the Dean, who retains ultimate authority for all decisions pertaining to readmission.**
 - a. Students readmitted to the professional curriculum following dismissal for academic reasons will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one semester, even if their GPA is greater than 2.0. Readmitted students having less than a 2.0 GPA in the professional curriculum must make up any grade point deficiencies as specified in the terms of their probation.
 - b. Any subsequent D or F grades will result in automatic dismissal from the professional curriculum. Students who have been dismissed from the program twice for any reason will not be considered for readmission. Any subsequent admission must be sought through the formal admission procedures for entering first year students.
 - c. All grades of D or F earned in the professional veterinary medical curriculum will remain part of the academic record upon readmission. When readmitted through the appeals process, these grades count toward grade accumulations as described in section 3.8.2 and the cumulative GPR.

6.2 Readmission for Academic Deficiencies in Semester 1

1. Students who are dismissed from the DVM program at the end of Semester 1 may reapply for admission as a new applicant to the program during the first admission cycle that begins after their dismissal. Since the application deadline is September 15 of each year, the student's reapplication for admission would not meet the deadline for being considered in the application cycle for the following Fall Semester after dismissal. The first admission cycle after dismissal at the end of Semester 1 would be the following year.
2. Those students who reapply and are deemed qualified will be placed in the applicant pool and must compete for a position from among the applicant pool.
3. In the event that the student reapplies for admission as a first year DVM student through the DVM application process and is selected to matriculate into the program, then all prior grades will remain on the transcript; however, they will not be counted towards accumulations as described in section 3.8.2, nor will it count as part of the grade point average in the new academic endeavor in the DVM Program.
4. The School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, through its undergraduate and graduate programs, assumes no responsibility for placement of these students in remedial undergraduate or graduate programs.

Admission and/or readmission to the undergraduate or graduate program is the prerogative of the appropriate Director or Associate Dean, who shall follow all rules and regulations pertaining thereto.

6.3 Readmission following Deferral

If the deferral was for medical or physical reasons, a health professional must certify via letter to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs that the student is ready to resume the academic rigors of the DVM Program. If the deferral was for other justifiable reasons, then appropriate documentation will be required to demonstrate the ability to continue with his/her academic studies. *The Associate Dean, in consultation with the appropriate Progress Committee, will determine if readmission will be allowed.* **Deferrals are granted for no more than one academic year. Circumstances requiring more than one year must be requested through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.**

6.4 Readmission following Dismissal or Suspension for Disciplinary Reasons

1. All requests for readmissions must be made in writing to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs at **least sixty (60) days prior** to the start of the semester in which the dismissed or suspended student wishes to re-enter the professional program.
2. The request must include:
 - a. The reason for dismissal or suspension.
 - b. The reason for requesting readmission.
 - c. If mental or physical health was a consideration in the suspension or dismissal, the applicant must include a medical professional's current evaluation of the student's health status. Additional substantiating documents may also be required.
3. The request for readmission, along with the applicant's prior academic records, will be presented to the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences Deans & Department Heads (D&DH) Committee by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. The D&DH Committee will carefully evaluate the request for readmission, along with the student's academic record and other pertinent information related to the dismissal or suspension.
4. The D&DH Committee may request that the applicant appear before the Committee, or the applicant may request permission to appear before the Committee to explain his/her request; the D&DH Committee retains the authority to grant or deny the applicant's request to appear.
5. The D&DH Committee may consult with the appropriate Academic Progress Committee to consider proper placement in the professional curriculum in cases where the D&DH Committee is recommending readmission.

6. The D&DH Committee will recommend either readmission or denial of readmission to the Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.
7. The Dean will review the recommendation of the Committee and advise the dismissed or suspended student of the decision. **The decision of the Dean will be final. The Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences retains ultimate authority for all decisions pertaining to admission and readmission.**

7. Veterinary Medical Code of Honor

7.1 Honor Code Statement

Since the integrity of the veterinary medical profession and the professional curriculum in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences is a reflection of the sum of the integrity of its members, veterinary medical students are required to conduct themselves toward colleagues, faculty, staff, clinical patients, clients and the public in an exemplary ethical and professional manner. Enrollment in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences is limited to a select few who will be endowed with the sacred trust of the control over life and death of animals under their care and the administration of controlled and prescribed drugs while performing this trust. Therefore, it is required that these individuals be of the highest moral character and that their ethical and professional conduct be unquestionable. The inherent, self-imposed discipline of the professional person should prevent them from committing any act that may reflect unfavorably upon the profession, the individual, or the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. This primary responsibility lies within the individual. Likewise, the correction of unethical behavior or practices by a colleague is the responsibility of fellow colleagues. The Veterinary Medical Code of Honor is intended to promote and strengthen this individual responsibility of students, faculty and staff.

7.2 Honor Code Purpose

- To build character and integrity through individual responsibility and actions.
- To advance ethical and professional standards of personal conduct among students enrolled in the professional curriculum in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.
- To promote the educational experience through a spirit of total honesty, friendly relations, and mutual respect among faculty, staff and students.
- To inculcate in the students the qualities that will uphold the dignity and integrity of the veterinary medical profession.
- To charge the faculty, staff and students with the responsibility for ethical and professional conduct and complete scholastic integrity.

- To provide the students, staff and faculty an avenue to handle any acts or behavior which violate the ethical, academic, and professional standards of conduct of the University and the SVMBS.

7.3 Student Honor Code Council

At the beginning of each academic year, the four professional classes will each elect two (2) students as class representatives to serve on both the Student/Faculty Relations Committee and the Student Honor Code Council. In addition, each VERO class cohort will elect one (1) member to serve on these committees. The Council will elect its own chairperson from these student members. One nonvoting faculty advisor will be appointed by the Dean and be present at all Council meetings. An alternate faculty advisor will also be appointed by the Dean. A quorum will consist of three-fourths (3/4) or more of the student members and the faculty advisor or alternate. A Council member may be excused from service in cases in which there is a conflict of interest or prejudicial position. Determination of the existence of a conflict is at the sole discretion of the School.

In the event that a student member of the DVM Student Honor Code Council is unable to attend a hearing, they may, with the approval of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and the faculty representative to the Honor Code Council, select a proxy to attend the hearing in his/her place.

7.4 Disciplinary Regulations

The Student Conduct Code shall apply to conduct that occurs on SVMBS/University premises and/or at SVMBS/University sponsored activities or any other activity which adversely affects the SVMBS/University community and/or the pursuit of its objectives (mission). This action may be taken for either affiliated or nonaffiliated activities.

The SVMBS may take action in situations occurring off university premises involving: student misconduct demonstrating flagrant disregard for any person or persons; or when a student's or student organization's behavior is judged to threaten the health, safety, and/or property of any individual or group. Using his/her sole discretion, the Associate Dean for Professional Programs shall decide whether the Student Conduct Code shall be applied to conduct occurring off campus on a case by case basis.

If a student behaves in a manner that would be unacceptable in the professional curriculum, in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, or in the practice of veterinary medicine, disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against the student for unprofessional behavior or for breach of professional ethics. Examples of such misconduct or breach of professional ethics shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

7.4.1 *Scholastic Dishonesty, according to Texas A&M University Student Rules*

- a. Cheating – a broad category that includes intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or assistance in completing an exam or assignment.

Examples:

- During an examination, looking at another student's examination or using external aids (e.g. books, notes, calculators, conversation with others, or electronic devices) unless specifically allowed in advance by the instructor.
 - Having others conduct research or prepare work without advance authorization from the instructor.
 - Acquiring answers for any assigned work or examinations from any unauthorized source. This includes, but is not limited to, using the services of commercial term paper companies, purchasing answer sets to homework from tutoring companies, and obtained information from students who have previously taken the exam.
 - Collaborating with other students in the completion of assigned work,, unless specifically authorized by the instructor teaching the course. It is safe to assume that all assignments are to be completed individually unless the instructor indicates otherwise. However, students who are unsure should seek clarification from their instructors.
 - Other similar acts.
- b. Fabrication/Falsification – making up or manipulating information or university documents.
- c. Plagiarism – using someone else's content (ideas, words, pictures, answers, etc.) except in the case of group projects.
- d. Complicity – third-party violations of intentionally helping or enabling someone else to commit academic misconduct. Examples include, but are not limited to: knowingly allowing another to copy from one's paper during an exam or test; distributing test questions or information about the test without the instructor's permission; collaborating on academic work when instructed that the work should be done on an independent basis only; taking an exam for another student; signing another's name on an exam or attendance sheet; conspiring or agreeing with one or more persons to commit or attempt to commit any act of scholastic dishonesty; any other similar acts of academic misconduct.

7.4.2 *Non-Scholastic Dishonesty, Misconduct, or Breach of Professional Ethics*

Other examples of dishonesty, misconduct, or breach of professional ethics, other than scholastic dishonesty, shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Violation of a federal or state law; forgery, alteration or misuse of University or hospital property, documents, or records.
- b. Conduct that significantly interferes with University teaching, research, or administration; conduct that endangers the health or safety of the student or others.
- c. Illegal use, illegal possession and/or illegal sale of a drug, narcotic, or other controlled substance as defined in the Texas Controlled Substances Act, on or off campus.
- d. Theft or any misappropriation of SVMBS, Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, or University property.
- e. Inappropriate, unprofessional, or disrespectful (verbal, nonverbal, or written) behavior toward other students, faculty, university or hospital staff, patients, or clients that disrupts the academic process.
- f. Engaging in defamatory communication that is distributed through social networking, emails, and texts. While it is recognized that social networking sites are a common form of personal communication, good judgment is expected when using these media tools. Photographs and graphic descriptions can be easily taken out of context by an outside viewer. ***Students must not utilize photographs of client-owned animals, laboratory or clinical activities, or other scenarios for personal networking sites or club websites without direct permission from the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.***
- g. Engaging in unprofessional conduct is prohibited on-campus and off-campus.

7.5 Procedures in Misconduct Cases

NOTE: Deviations from this process, if required by special circumstances, shall not be considered a violation of a student's due process unless it results in substantial prejudice to the student.

It shall be the individual duty and responsibility of every student, staff, and/or faculty member to act on any student violation or misconduct. When a violation or act of misconduct is recognized, the student, staff, and/or faculty member should take prompt action as follows, depending on the violation or misconduct:

- a. Directly contact the student involved in the questionable activity, violation, or misconduct and request the student to cease the questionable activity, violation, or misconduct; OR

- b. Involve the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, which triggers a meeting to discuss the allegation with all three parties (the accuser, the student, and the Associate Dean).

If, in the opinion of the instructor, administrator, staff, or student, the violation is so egregious that it deserves a sanction of separation from the University, the case is referred to the Honor Council for adjudication.

An Academic Process Not a Legal One

The rules associated with academic misconduct are built around an academic process used at many peer universities. While it draws on some aspects of a court of law in processes and terminology, such as requiring evidence to find a student in violation of the Honor Code, it does not have the weight of law or the same requirements on proof.

An Honor Code Council hearing panel is an academic hearing that allows both the instructor and the student to present their sides, along with any documentation or evidence supporting the allegation to a panel of neutral peers. It is important that students and instructors speak up with any information they can provide to help the Honor Code Council panel composed of students and faculty members better understand the events surrounding the case.

7.5.1 Procedure for Scholastic Dishonesty

- a. Report to the DVM Student Honor Code Council through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.
- b. The categories of scholastic dishonesty are as listed in Texas A&M University Student Rules ([20.1.2.3](#)).
- c. The instructor or course coordinator for a course shall be the instructor of record for the course in which the claim of scholastic dishonesty is being made by a student, staff, or faculty member. **The instructor(s) may choose to meet with the student first, without the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, or may involve the Associate Dean for Professional Programs at this stage and all three parties will meet.** The instructor shall inform the student of the alleged dishonesty and what sanction(s) he/she will recommend.

Note: Unless the instructor decides to handle the situation, the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, instructor, and student will meet to discuss the allegations and the recommended sanctions.

- d. If a successful resolution that is satisfactory to all parties is not achieved, the case will be forwarded to the DVM Student Honor Code Council by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. The Associate Dean will inform the student of the procedures that the Honor Code Council will follow.
- e. If, after hearing the student's version of events, the instructor judges the student to be responsible for scholastic dishonesty, the instructor will make a written report, signed by the appropriate department

head, to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, with copies to the student and instructor's department head, giving an outline of the incident and a recommendation of sanction(s) to be imposed according to Texas A&M University Student Rules.

- f. The student will also be informed of his/her right to appeal to the Honor Code Council regarding either the question of guilt or the sanction(s).
- g. The student's work in the course and the grade in the course are to be considered and reported as **Incomplete** until the final resolution of the case has been achieved. The student should continue to attend classes, take examinations, and participate in the academic requirements of the School.
- h. If the student has appealed the instructor's recommendation, the DVM Student Honor Code Council shall conduct a hearing. The School will record all testimony at DVM Student Honor Code Council hearings. The student and the instructor shall be allowed to present witnesses and provide evidence relating to the charge. The burden of proof shall be on the School to prove its case by a preponderance of evidence. Preponderance of evidence is defined as the greater weight and degree of credible evidence admitted at the hearing.
- i. The instructor's recommendation may be dismissed, reduced, upheld, or increased by the Student Honor Code Council. Decisions must be made by a majority of those present. Sanctions that may be decided by the DVM Student Honor Code Council will be according to Texas A&M University Rules and will be implemented by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.
- j. If the DVM Student Honor Code Council concurs with the instructor's recommendation, and the student has not appealed the Honor Code Council ruling, the Associate Dean for Professional Programs will implement the sanction(s).
- k. The decision, including any and all sanctions, resulting from this hearing shall be forwarded in writing to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and to the student. The student may appeal to the School Disciplinary Appeals Committee according to the procedures in section 7.6 of the Professional Student Handbook.

7.5.2 *Student Rights and Responsibilities in Scholastic Dishonesty Cases*

The student shall be afforded the following rights in the hearing conducted by the Student Honor Code Council:

- a. Right to an explanation of the School's evidence by receiving reasonable access to the case file.

- b. Right to a list of names of witnesses against him/her and a brief statement of the facts to which each will testify.
- c. Right to question any witnesses against him/her called before the DVM Student Honor Code Council hearing and the right to present documentary evidence or witnesses (live or by affidavit) on his/her behalf. A list of character witnesses should be presented only by letter or affidavit. A list of material witnesses (not character witnesses) to be called by the student or University must be presented to the Council at least five (5) working days before the hearing.
- d. Right to have one non-participating observer present during the hearing. The observer cannot be a witness or other person involved in the incident; cannot participate or represent the student or communicate in any way with the DVM Student Honor Code Council in the hearing.
- e. A student may not be represented by an attorney at a hearing before the Student Honor Code Council, unless the DVM Student Honor Code Council is also represented by an attorney.
- f. If the student elects to have an attorney present as the one non-participating observer at the DVM Student Honor Code Council hearing, the student must notify the Associate Dean for Professional Programs seven (7) working days in advance of the hearing that he/she will have an attorney present.
- g. Right to appeal the disciplinary decision of the DVM student Honor Code Council to the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee.
- h. Right to request a copy of the recording of testimony from the DVM Student Honor Code Council hearing at the expense of the student.

7.5.3 *Remediation of an F grade following academic dishonesty*

- a. Since the Academic Standards of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences require that remediation of any grade of “F” for academic failure be successfully completed before a student can matriculate to the next year or semester of the professional curriculum, the student receiving the grade of “F” as a sanction for academic dishonesty must successfully remediate the grade of “F” according to the Professional Student Handbook (section 3.8.10).
- b. The remediation requirements for a passing grade shall be given in writing to the student by the instructor of the course with a copy to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and the appropriate department head.

- c. Remediation requirements following scholastic dishonesty may include assignments or trainings related to academic integrity and may include modules from the Aggie Honor Code office.

7.5.4 Procedure for Misconduct Other than Scholastic Dishonesty

- a. For violations, misconduct, or questionable activities other than scholastic dishonesty, the student, staff, or faculty member is to report the claim in writing to the DVM Student Honor Code Council through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within ten (10) University business days. When a faculty or staff member submits an alleged violation or act of misconduct to the DVM Student Honor Code Council and Associate Dean for Professional Programs, it is to include the signature of acknowledgment from his or her respective Department Head.
- b. The Student Honor Code Council, through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, shall notify the student in question of the charges and his/her rights and conduct a hearing under the same procedures as given above for Scholastic Dishonesty in the Professional Student Handbook.

7.6 Appeal of DVM Student Honor Code Council Decisions to the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee

If the student wishes to appeal the decision made by the Student Honor Code Council, he/she must provide written notice to the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within five (5) working days of receiving notice of the decision. An appeal can only be made on the basis of unjust sanction or violation of due process.

7.6.1 School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee Membership

At the beginning of each academic year, the Dean shall appoint a faculty member as Chair, four (4) additional faculty members, and four (4) professional students to serve on the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee. The student members shall be the President and Vice-President of the 2VM and 3VM classes. The faculty members of this committee shall be the same as those named to the Academic Appeals Committee. A quorum shall consist of three (3) faculty and three (3) students. Student members may be excused from service in a disciplinary appeals hearing if the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee feels that a conflict of interest exists. The Dean may appoint a substitute member.

7.6.2 School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeal Procedures

- a. The student must file a written request for an appeal hearing to the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee

through the Associate Dean for Professional Programs within five (5) working days of the delivery of the decision regarding disciplinary action taken by the Student Honor Code Council. The student must identify in the written request the specific reason for the appeal. The appeal can only be made on the basis of unjust sanction or violation of due process. Following the filing of the written appeal and pending the appeal hearing, the disciplinary action taken by the DVM Student Honor Code Council shall be stayed, unless the Council has determined a case involving suspension, dismissal, or expulsion that the presence on campus of the student poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process. If the student is allowed to remain on campus during the appeal, the student should continue to attend classes, take examinations, and participate in the academic requirements.

- b. Upon receipt of the written request for a hearing, the Chair shall set a time and place for the hearing as soon as practicable.
- c. The Chair shall sit as the hearing officer and rule on all procedural matters and admissibility of evidence. The Chair will participate in all deliberations of the Committee and not vote except to cast the tie-breaking vote. Though a formal proceeding, the hearing process does not require strict adherence to formal courtroom procedures or the rules of evidence.
- d. In all cases where the DVM Student Honor Code Council has conducted a hearing and rendered a decision, the burden of proof in an appeal to the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be with the student to prove its case by a preponderance of evidence, i.e., there were no due process violations or the sanction was not unjust. Preponderance of evidence is defined as the greater weight and degree of credible evidence admitted at the hearing.
- e. The report and decision from the DVM Student Honor Code Council hearing shall be forwarded to the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee as a part of the appeals process.
- f. The student shall have the right to consult with counsel of his or her own choosing, to present such witnesses and documentary evidence as may be pertinent, and to cross-examine witnesses offered by the School. An attorney or an individual acting as an advisor may not represent the student directly, directly question or cross-examine witnesses, except in a case where the School is represented by an attorney. The student must notify the School seven (7) working days prior to the hearing, of intent to have an attorney present as a nonparticipating witness.

- g. All parties shall be afforded the opportunity for reasonable oral argument and shall be permitted to file typewritten or reproduced material.
- h. Upon the request of either party, the Chair shall cause the testimony presented at the hearing to be recorded. A copy of the recording may be obtained from the Chair of the Committee at the expense of the requesting party.
- i. After hearing the appeal, the Committee will go into closed session to deliberate. Upon conclusion of its deliberations, the Committee shall inform the student in writing by formal letter within five (5) working days of its decision. A copy of this letter outlining the decision of the Committee shall be sent to the student, the Honor Code Council, any instructors involved, the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, and the Dean.
- j. The decision of the School of Veterinary Medicine Disciplinary Appeals Committee will be final at the School level.

7.7 Evidence of Review

The standard of review to be used in all proceedings under this section shall be fundamental fairness. Strict rules of evidence and procedures are not required so long as the proceedings are conducted in such a manner as to allow the student to fairly explain the circumstances. Decisions regarding the admissibility of evidence and the weight to be given to same shall be made by the hearing body who is conducting the hearing.

7.8 Departure from Campus Following Expulsion, Dismissal or Suspension

Students who have been required to withdraw from the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences for disciplinary reasons shall leave the premises immediately after being notified. The student will further be required to return his/her Student ID card, any issued security keys and all security access cards to any of the facilities in the Veterinary Medical Complex.

8. Professionalism, Dress, and Personal Grooming Considerations

8.1 Professionalism

8.1.1 Cell Phone and Electronic Device Use in Classrooms and Laboratories

Each instructor or course coordinator will determine if the use of these devices is permissible in their lecture and/or laboratory. The information should be made available to students in their respective syllabi.

*8.1.2 Student Alcohol Policy**

The Student Alcohol Policy of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences defines the stipulations and requirements set forth for all student organizations and classes relative to the consumption of alcoholic beverages at any event/activity/function directly or indirectly

associated with this School. This policy applies to all professional DVM students, graduate students, and undergraduate students affiliated with the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. The need for alcohol at any student-related activity should first be carefully evaluated and weighed against its potential liabilities and other disadvantages.

DVM students must get permission from the Associate Dean for Professional Programs prior to scheduling an event representing the School at which alcohol would be served.

- If alcohol is served, it shall be in compliance with *TAMU Student Rules* and allowed only through a private vendor duly licensed to provide cash sale of alcoholic beverages in strict compliance with *Texas State Laws*.
- A **licensed vendor must submit** to the sponsoring organization a written verification of its current license ten (10) days in advance of a scheduled event. **Free alcoholic beverages are prohibited at all student-related activities, and funds from student organizations or classes shall not be used directly or indirectly to purchase alcohol.**
- Legally underage persons shall not consume alcoholic beverages under any circumstances, and only the individual legally purchasing an alcoholic beverage at a student-related event shall consume it. Private companies sponsoring a student event are included in this policy, and there are no exceptions to this policy.
- Funds from student organizations or classes shall not be used directly or indirectly to purchase alcohol.

*This Policy was adopted and shall be enforced to: (1) ensure compliance with all University rules and Texas State Laws pertaining to consumption of alcoholic beverages; (2) protect all School students, staff, faculty, and administration from risks and legal liabilities resulting from misuse of alcohol by participants at student-related events; and (3) provide responsible and professional conduct consistent with a medical profession and its members.

8.1.3 *Copyright Material Violations and Rules*

Reproduction of copyrighted materials in the classroom is governed primarily by the “fair use doctrine” embodied in 17 USC § 107. The fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or electronic means, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use, the factors to be considered shall include (all four factors must be considered):

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes.

- The nature of the copyrighted work.
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole.
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for, or value of, the copyrighted work.

The following rules regarding copying and distributing textbooks and classroom materials should be followed:

- A teacher or student may reproduce small parts of a copyrighted work to illustrate a lesson. Quotation of short passages from a scholarly or technical work, for illustration or clarification of the author's observations, is also acceptable.
- Teachers may photocopy articles to hand out in class, but the guidelines impose restrictions. Classroom copying cannot be used to replace texts or workbooks used in the classroom. **The number of copies cannot exceed more than one copy per student. Students may not redistribute to other students** unless it is to replace a lost or destroyed original copy.
- Students may not copy and distribute, either by hard-copy or electronically, any material created by their instructor unless given permission by the respective instructor. **This includes past exams, PowerPoints, images, notes, and answer keys written by the instructor. In fairness to the other students, if permission is given to distribute an old exam, the exam must be distributed to the entire class.**
- Under no circumstance should any text be copied in its entirety.

8.1.4 *Use of Photographs and Other Images of Client-Owned, Teaching, or Research Animals*

It is the policy of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences & Biomedical Sciences to prohibit personal or video recordings of client-owned, teaching, or research animals. It is the responsibility of all SVM and VMTH faculty, staff, and students to ensure the privacy of patients. Clients may agree to casual photographs, but what may seem interesting to veterinary professionals and veterinary students, may appear inappropriate to others. In no case are personal photographs or video recordings to be made of animals admitted to or housed in the VMTH. Personal photographs and other images of client-owned, wildlife, research, or other teaching animals may not be used on personal Facebook pages or other social media. When in doubt, consult the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

Violations of this policy will be considered a breach of the Honor Code.

8.1.5 *Use of Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital Resources*

A. Purpose

To ensure appropriate use of Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital (VMTH)-owned equipment and resources, to eliminate undue risk of injury to VMTH personnel and other individuals, and to prevent loss or damage to Hospital property. Faculty, staff, and students shall not use Hospital equipment or resources for other than authorized activities.

B. Responsibilities

All faculty, staff, and students are responsible for adhering to this policy and the associated policies and rules listed below.

C. Procedures

Faculty, staff, and students shall not use system equipment, property, or resources for their personal benefit or in any manner contrary to its intended use. When in doubt about using VMTH equipment, consult Hospital Administration. Hospital equipment, supplies, and resources shall not be used to provide medical care, diagnoses, or treatments for humans. Specific examples of VMTH diagnostic equipment that should not be used for humans include radiograph machines, ultrasound machines, anesthesia machines, electrocardiography equipment, and advanced imaging and therapy equipment (MRI, CT, TomoTherapy); the preceding list is intended to provide examples and is not all inclusive.

The overall policy as stated above notwithstanding, the administration of the VMTH understands and approves of the emergency use of appropriate VMTH supplies and equipment for individuals in the VMTH with acute injuries and illness; appropriate emergency care and first aid may require use of supplies and equipment owned by the VMTH (e.g., temporary bandages, antiseptic solutions, and emergency defibrillator units that are intended for human use in emergencies) until EMTs arrive or the individual is transported for medical care by a physician.

8.1.6 *Animals in School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences Buildings*

The existing School Policy on private animals in the workplace was reaffirmed at the January 25, 2000 meeting of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences Executive Committee, as reported below.

Texas A&M University rules prohibit personal pets and animals in University buildings except where authorized. Item 36.1 of the Texas A&M University Student Rules states the following:

36.1 With the exception of Seeing Eye dogs and other official service dogs, fish for aquaria, and the official university mascot, animals are not permitted in residence halls, university food service areas, university owned apartments or other university buildings

except where authorized. Such authorization must be obtained in writing from the particular building proctor. When a classroom situation is involved, the pet owner must also obtain additional authorization from the instructor of the class.

36.2 Animals will not be allowed to run at large on campus and must be leashed at all times.

36.3 Animals shall not be left unattended or secured to university property.

The School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences and Hospital Board recognizes that many employees in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences do have pets. However, University and School operations cannot be properly performed if all persons are allowed to have pets and animals with them in the buildings, and it is unfair to allow exceptions or special treatment for certain individuals. The policy of the School will be as stated above in the Texas A&M University Student Rules with the following addendum:

“Pets and animals of the employees and students shall not be brought to, or housed in, School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences and Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital buildings except by appointment, and shall be housed in an approved animal housing area. The Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences will provide a cage or run to employees and students who have appointments to bring their animals for treatment. However, arrangements must be made in advance of the appointment date with the clinician handling the case, and the clinician or his/her representative must be present at the time the animal is admitted. Casual ‘drop-offs’ without prior arrangements will not be accepted. Employee and student owned animals being used for teaching purposes must have prior approvals and releases signed according to school policies and will not be provided housing by the academic department in which the course is taught. No overnight housing is allowed and only one day or half-day housing will be approved.”

(SVM Executive Committee 07/02/02)

8.1.7 Animals Used in Teaching Laboratories

1. In the professional curriculum, some laboratory exercises require the use of live animals. The policy of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences is: to use animals in teaching and research only when deemed necessary and where acceptable alternatives are not available; to provide humane treatment of these animals; to use as few animals as possible while maintaining high quality teaching and research. All animal usage is reviewed for strict compliance with appropriate guidelines and regulations by the University Laboratory Animal Care Committee (ULAC). This policy is based on the

conviction that the benefits of animal use and the skills and knowledge that can be gained are essential to animal and human health and welfare.

2. Laboratory exercises that use animals are designed to complement didactic lectures and demonstrations through hands-on experience with various species of animals. In all instances, the animals are humanely treated and anesthetized if the procedures are deemed painful. Animals are humanely euthanized at the termination of most invasive laboratory exercises.
3. In a restricted number of courses, live animals are used in laboratory exercises for the teaching of basic concepts, skills, and procedures. Strict faculty supervision and specific procedures are enforced regarding the animals' well-being. Participation in these exercises is required for all students to complete satisfactorily certain courses and to be given a passing grade and credit.

8.2 Visitors in the Classrooms

Students may bring visitors, including family members, to the classroom **only under the following conditions:**

- No greater than two days per semester.
- Must have received permission from each instructor.
- Must not be disruptive to the classroom environment.
- No visitors are allowed into laboratories due to safety concerns.

Any visitors wishing to be in classrooms greater than 2 days must receive permission from the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and each instructor involved.

8.3 Guidelines and Ethical Principles for TAMU SVM Students Regarding Corporate Gifts and Sponsorships

1. Introduction

The guidelines listed below are to assure that Texas A&M University School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences & Biomedical Sciences (TAMU SVM) meets ethical standards consistent with university, school, and professional core values. We value our industry partners and recognize our common goals to enhance the profession through education, research, and outreach.

2. Overarching Principles

- a. **Transparency:** All corporate gifts and sponsorships will be publicly identified.
- b. **Educational Value:** All corporate gifts and sponsorships should have redeeming educational value as identified by the TAMU SVM leadership.

The corporations may provide educational opportunities to the DVM students if supervised or approved by TAMU SVM faculty or leadership.

- c. **Corporate Equity:** All corporate sponsors, having met and agreed to the above conditions, will be treated equally and without favoritism with regard to their ability to donate to the TAMU SVM.
- d. **Student Education:** During the course of the curriculum, all DVM students will be exposed to the ethical concerns and potential bias associated with corporate gifts and sponsorship. We expect students to develop critical reasoning skills that allow them to make informed decisions regarding evidence based medicine, including how it relates to gifts and sponsorships.

3. Guidelines for DVM Student Representatives and Corporate Entities

- a. Oversight for activities related to students and corporations will be provided by the Professional Programs Office with input from appropriate faculty. All sponsored activities must be consistent with the educational, research, or outreach missions of the TAMU SVM. All other activities are prohibited.
- b. The Associate Dean for Professional Programs will be the initial contact for a company wishing to establish a student representative program or other student-related programs within the SVM. The company must apply through the Professional Programs Office and provide written information including expectations for time required for the student, how the student will be compensated, and what legitimate educational value will this relationship bring to the SVM. Based on this information, the Associate Dean will be responsible for determining whether to approve the request.
- c. Students must maintain a 2.5 GPA (each semester and cumulatively) to serve in a student representative position.
- d. The student must inform the Professional Programs Office of their representative position and contact information for themselves and the corporate contact.
- e. Student representatives must provide an annual summary of activities to the Professional Programs Office.
- f. Student representatives are responsible for interacting with the student body and providing information regarding lunches, lunch speakers, etc. They must adhere to the school calendar system and are not excused from any classroom activities unless approved by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs or the course instructor. If food or drinks are served, the student representative(s) are responsible for clean-up and trash collection.
- g. Presentations to the student body by corporate entities must be balanced and limited to evidence-based information.
- h. School list serve information will not be shared with corporate entities.

- i. Any marketing materials cannot use TAMU logos or names and students may not endorse products for the SVM.
- j. Any written agreements between a corporate entity and a student organization must be approved by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs, the Assistant Dean for Finance, and legal counsel if appropriate.
- k. All corporate-sponsored activities, whether on campus or off campus, must abide by SVM and University rules and regulations. It is the responsibility of the student representative to assure that all activities meet appropriate guidelines.

8.4 Dress and Personal Grooming Considerations

1. The personal appearance and dress in the health professions and for those students working toward these careers are extremely important in establishing and maintaining respected doctor-client relationships. The public demands and expects that the doctor be neatly dressed and properly groomed. Research has clearly confirmed the importance of this professional appearance and behavior. Students in the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences are expected to develop and uphold these standards at all times and to use good judgment in proper dress and grooming. Students have a professional responsibility to demonstrate these standards and to set proper attitudes and behaviors while pursuing their DVM degree.
2. Students enrolled in the professional curriculum of the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences participate in a professional medical field where the threat of exposure to and the chance for spread of infectious agents are greater than in the general population. Therefore, for the safety of all personnel, extra care and attention must be given to cleanliness and sanitation as essential safeguards.
3. The person, his/her equipment, and his/her environment must be kept in such orderliness as to reduce the chance of becoming infected or spreading infection to others. It is for this reason that students will not wear the protective clothing, smock, lab coat, overalls or coveralls in public places away from the School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (retail establishments, public gatherings, entertainment and sports events, etc.). These clothing items are to be worn only while engaged in educational, research and/or service activities directly related to veterinary medicine.
4. The School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences takes seriously its responsibility to the veterinary medical profession to teach and to train our students the professional ethics to respect colleagues, clients and authority. Interactions and respect for colleagues, clients and licensing authorities are a part of daily professional life. Therefore, the School expects students to dress and act in a manner consistent with this obligation.

5. While personal style and fashion vary from individual to individual, there are particular standards that should be maintained for professional dress. These should include:
 - a. No exposure of skin between shirts and pants/skirts
 - b. No shorts
 - c. No hats or caps, with the exception of religious head wear in class or indoor laboratories.
 - d. Closed toe shoes and closed heel shoes are to be worn in laboratories and on clinical rotations.

Additionally, please be mindful of the length of skirts/dresses and the appearance of other attire that can be distracting or may not allow adequate participation in curricular activities. A student may be excused from an activity by a faculty member if their dress is felt to be inappropriate for the setting.

There is no question that others, including faculty and clients, pay close attention to what you wear. Assessment of your professionalism will be directly tied to your appearance, as well as your actions and words.

8.5 Dress Code

8.5.1 *Lecture and Laboratory Classes*

The following regulations are established by which students will be guided

- a. Students should be attired in neat, professional clothing.
- b. The student should be dressed appropriately. Protective wear or a white jacket or white coat will cover dress clothes, except in the large animal clinic, in necropsy, and in other laboratories specified by the instructors in which coveralls or overalls will be worn.
- c. Name tags must be worn at all times.

8.5.2 *Clinical Rotations*

Students will dress in the manner prescribed by the clinic in which they are assigned. Maintaining a professional appearance before the public is of the utmost importance for students participating in clinical rotations. Adherence to the specified criteria is an essential factor in performance evaluation in the clinical setting. Name tags must be worn at all times.

8.5.3 *Special Protective Clothing*

Special protective clothing will be worn in designated areas as specified by the course instructor.

8.6 Dress Code Violations

For violation of these dress and personal grooming regulations, the instructor is authorized to dismiss a student from the laboratory, clinic, or other official activity. Repeated violation may be sufficient cause for an unsatisfactory grade.



Professional Programs Office
VETERINARY MEDICINE & BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

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