

Technical Standards & Essential Functions for the Veterinary Technology Program

The abilities and skills which students must possess in order to complete the training associated with the Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) **Veterinary Technology Program** are referred to as Technical Standards. These Technical Standards are a group of minimal physical and cognitive abilities as well as sufficient mental and emotional stability to confirm that students are able to complete the entire course of study, participate fully in all aspects of training, and be deployable as competent Licensed Veterinary Technicians (LVTs), with or without reasonable accommodation.

The NOVA Veterinary Technology Program has the ethical responsibility for the safety of the animals with whom students will come in contact, and to the public to assure that its students can become fully competent Veterinary Technician professionals. Thus, it is important that persons admitted to our programs possess the intelligence, integrity, animal compassion, humanitarian concern, and physical and emotional capacity necessary to practice veterinary technology skills. Students must verify that they meet these Technical Standards immediately prior to the time of matriculation into our programs and maintain them throughout their training. Students are obligated to alert the administration and faculty in **Veterinary Technology Program** of any change in their ability to fulfill the technical standards. Students who do not meet or maintain these Technical Standards will be at risk for dismissal from the program.

The Northern Virginia Community College **Veterinary Technology Program** uses the essential functions established by the program's accrediting body, the American Veterinary Medical Association's Committee of Veterinary Technician Education and Activities and the Association of Veterinary Technician Educators (AVTE) guidelines. These Technical Standards & Essential Functions were reviewed and approved by the NOVA **Veterinary Technology Program** Curriculum Advisory Board on October 4, 2013. These Technical Standards and Essential Functions are reviewed annually by the NOVA **Veterinary Technology Program** Curriculum Advisory Board.

Instructions to Student: Read all statements below then checkmark box and place initials next to each one in margin. Sign acknowledgment statement on last page.

Technical Standard I: Observation

- Observe demonstrations and fully participate in physical examination sessions, clinical skills workshops, observe the difference of normal versus pathological states in various animal species. They must be able to obtain a medical history from client or farmer and perform a complete physical examination in order to integrate findings based on these observations, perform medical record keeping, assist veterinarian in appropriate diagnostic sampling and initiation of the veterinary medical treatment plan.
- Ability to utilize auditory and sensory perception sufficient to monitor and assess animal patient needs.
- Possess normal or corrected visual ability in order to assess oral health conditions and perform clinical procedures on animal patients.
- Ability to see details at a close range and to make observations and assessments necessary in animal care.
- Be able to use diagnostic equipment i.e. microscope, thermometer, refractometer etc.
- Observe movement at a distance ranging from 30-45 centimeters to 15-20 meters at a discrimination level that permits detection of subtle differences in movement of the limbs in animals. This includes the ability to detect and describe a change in color of hair coat caused by licking or trauma, detect abnormal head posture in a parakeet, monitor respiratory rate during anesthesia, and read anesthesia monitoring equipment.

- ❑ Discriminate shades of black and white patterns in which the band is not more than 0.5 mm in width. This includes the ability to characterize bacterial hemolysis on a blood agar plate, density patterns on a radiograph, and see ECG tracings.
- ❑ Possess adequate depth perception to allow detection of a 0.5 cm elevation which is no more than 1cm in diameter on a slightly curved surface having a slightly irregular surface. This includes detection of tissue swelling on the hip on a smooth-haired dog to determine the presence of a reaction to skin testing for allergies.

Technical Standard II: Communication

- ❑ Communicate effectively and sensitively with animal patients, their owners, and members of the veterinary medical, healthcare team.
- ❑ Communicate effectively with the client owner from different social and cultural backgrounds, as well as develop effective professional rapport with client owner, co-workers, and veterinarians.
- ❑ Record examination and diagnostics results clearly, accurately and efficiently.
- ❑ Communicate effectively in English to animal patients, and with client owner, and other veterinary health care professionals in a variety of animal patient settings.
- ❑ Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. Hear auscultatory sounds, monitor alarms, emergency and cries for help. Hear warning sounds from animals and humans of impending danger / injury.
- ❑ Perceive the natural or amplified human voice without lip reading to permit oral communication in a surgery room with all occupants wearing surgical masks.
- ❑ Perceive the origin of sound as needed to detect movement of large animals in a pen or corral or monitoring multiple patients in an ICU.

Technical Standard III: Motor Function

- ❑ Possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to respond to emergency situations in a timely manner and provide general and emergency care.
- ❑ Possess adequate sensory function and motor coordination to fulfill minimum competency objectives for animal restraint inspection, palpation and auscultation necessary to perform a physical examination.
- ❑ Ability to tolerate walking and standing for sustained periods of time.
- ❑ Capable of handling, positioning and restraining live animals
- ❑ Possess sufficient postural control, neuromuscular control and eye-to-hand coordination in order to utilize standard medical/surgical instruments to participate in the inpatient and outpatient setting and other clinical activities.
- ❑ Possess sufficient motor function, strength, and endurance with both hands and arms as well as utilize digital fine motor skills to deliver animal patient care for varying lengths of time throughout the day.
- ❑ Have the ability to adjust body mechanics ergonomically, move around in an examination room, animal wards/kennels, stalls/pens/barns, surgical and dentistry operator, reception, pharmacy, other work spaces, and laboratory as well as lift 50 lbs. unassisted.
- ❑ Have the ability to perform Cardiopulmonary Cerebral Recitation (CPCR) in the management of animal patient during an emergency.
- ❑ Possess the physical capacity to participate in required laboratory, preclinical, and veterinary clinical experiences such as appropriate animal restraint as well as lift and operate equipment with necessary strength and dexterity.
- ❑ Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and to perform nursing duties. Perform palpation during physical exams. Administer oral, intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intravenous medications. Insert and remove tubes and perform wound care management. Collect organic samples from live animals.

- Must be able to have sustained contact with multiple species of animals and be amenable to learning the safe handling, restraining, and working with these animals. An individual should not be allergic to any species of animals to the extent that would prohibit working in a facility that has them.
- Ability to move his/her entire body a distance of no less than three meters within two seconds of a signal to do so, to move rapidly from danger while handling animals in confined spaces.
- Ability to hold, manipulate, or tie materials ranging from a cloth patch to a very fine string. This includes the ability to hold and manipulate a surgical sponge, tie a 00 silk suture, perform endotracheal intubation, inject liquid intravenously, catheterize animals to obtain urine and/or other body fluids samples, and apply bandages without assistance.

Technical Standard IV: Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- Ability to learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction; small group, team and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports; and use computer technology.
- Possess the mental capacity to assimilate and learn a large amount of complex, technical and detailed information in order to conduct diagnostic sampling, testing and analysis and follow therapeutic plans under veterinary supervision.
- Students must take into account the characteristics of the facility, animal patients and client owners, the veterinary technician will effectively contribute to the professional and efficient operation of the facility in order to provide maximum benefits to clients, patients, and the facility.
- Ability to schedule appointments, admit, discharge and triage according to client, patient and facility needs through phone and in-person contact.
- Recognize and respond to veterinary medical emergencies.
- Create and maintain individual client/patient records, vaccination certificates, and other appropriate forms:
 - develop computer skill
 - be able to utilize common management software programs
 - be familiar with veterinary on-line services
- Perform basic filing of medical records, radiographs, lab reports, etc.
- Create and maintain all appropriate facility records and logs in compliance with regulatory guidelines (e.g., radiography, surgery, anesthesia, laboratory, controlled substance).
- Manage inventory control.
- Recognize roles of appropriate regulatory agencies.
- Maintain appropriate disposal protocols for hazardous materials
- Establish and maintain appropriate sanitation and nosocomial protocols for a veterinary facility, including patient and laboratory area.
- Must be able to handle routine financial transactions.
- Prepare medications; label and package dispensed drugs correctly.
- Read and follow veterinarian's pharmacy orders.
- Recognize groups of drugs, their mechanisms, and clinically relevant side effects.
- Recognize the safe and effective manner in which vaccines must be administered; recognize and explain common side effects.
- Accurately perform appropriate calculations; use weights and measures correctly.
- Safely and effectively administer drugs by common parenteral and enteral routes; be able to explain appropriate routes and methods and when used
- Monitor therapeutic responses.
- Demonstrate the ability to accurately record medical information.
- Demonstrate understanding of controlled substance regulations.

- Demonstrate compliance with all federal regulatory guidelines for drug purchase, storage, administration, withdrawal, dispensing, disposal, and inventory control (e.g., biologics and therapeutic agents, pesticides, and hazardous wastes).
- Amenable to learning the safe handling, restraining and working with any species of domestic or exotic animals without fear. These animals may be sick, injured, fractious, or aggressive without fear.
- Willingness to assist with or perform a wide variety of routine medical surgical and diagnostic procedures common to the veterinary setting; including humane euthanasia.
- Possess emotional stability when performing duties in animal life and death situations or other stressful situations.
- Complete required tasks/functions under stressful and/or unpredictable conditions, including emergency situations.
- Be able to progress toward minimal supervision as they advance through the program.

Technical Standard V: Behavioral and Social Attributes

- Have the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly, without warning, and/or in unpredictable ways.
- Accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to aiding in veterinarian's diagnosis and care of animal patients.
- Understand the legal and ethical standards of the veterinary medical profession.
- Ability to work effectively, respectfully and professionally as part of the veterinary healthcare team, and to interact with animal patients, their client owners, and veterinary health care personnel in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner.
- Ability to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes.
- Apply understanding of interpersonal skills and team dynamics in all aspects of team dynamics.
- Utilize appropriate interpersonal and public relations skills.
- Must demonstrate telephone etiquette.
- Recognize the legality of the veterinary-client-patient relationship.
- Develop and provide client education in a clear and accurate manner at a level the client understands (i.e., oral and written form, including educational handouts).
- Use crisis intervention/grief management skills with clients.

Technical Standard VI: Ethical and Legal Standards

- Ability to understand the basis and content of both general and veterinary medical ethics.
- Possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility, and tolerance.
- Recognize limitations in their knowledge, skills and abilities and to seek appropriate assistance with their identified limitations.
- Students whose performance is impaired by abuse of alcohol or other substances are not suitable candidates for admission, promotion, or graduation. In addition, should the student be convicted of any felony offense while in the **Veterinary Technology** Program, they agree to immediately notify the program assistant dean or program head as to the nature of the conviction. Failure to disclosure prior or new offenses can lead to disciplinary action that may include dismissal.
- Students must understand and observe legal boundaries of veterinary health care team members.
- Students must interact professionally with clients and fellow staff members.
- Students must demonstrate a commitment to high quality patient care.
- Students must respect and protect the confidentiality of client and patient information.

Reasonable Disability Accommodations

Request for reasonable accommodations must be initiated by the student. Reasonable accommodations may be provided for students with documented disabilities upon submission of appropriate documentation. Documentation must include the names, titles, professional credentials, license number, addresses, and phone numbers of the medical professionals that evaluated the student as well as the date of the evaluation. The evaluation report must include a summary of the assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a narrative summary of evaluation results. The evaluation must list specific accommodations requested and the rationale for those accommodations. Documentation for eligibility must be current, preferably within the last three years. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations. Students may be required to re-submit this documentation each semester to allow for review of continuing eligibility for accommodations.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a disability as a substantial limitation of a major life function. A temporary medical condition does not qualify as a disability and is not covered under the ADA of 1990 or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act because the extent, duration, and impact of the condition are not permanent. Accommodations may not provide an unfair advantage to the students, fundamentally alter the nature and substance of the curriculum, present an undue hardship for the institution, pose a direct threat to the safety of patients, or compromise the academic integrity of the program. Students may be required to cover the cost of such accommodations and should be aware that a potential employer may not be amenable to use of accommodations that result in undue hardship to the employer. Students receiving accommodations must be aware that these may not be available from a prospective employer. Veterinary practices with small numbers of employees may be exempt from the requirements of the ADA.

Examples of reasonable accommodations that may be available to students that qualify under the ADA for performance of required skills could include the following:

- Amplified stethoscope
- Portable speech amplifier
- Hearing aids
- Clear surgical masks
- Magnifying headsets
- Non-allergenic gloves
- Magnifying microscope monitor

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the Technical Standards/**Essential Functions** as outlined above.

Signature of NOVA Student

Date

Print Full Name

Student EMPLID