



**Office of Professional & Continuing Education**  
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Auburn University is an equal opportunity educational institution/employer.

## **Education & Training Plan**

### **Veterinary Assistant Specialist Certificate Program with Externship**

Student Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Program includes National Certification & an Externship Opportunity**

#### **Mentor Supported**

### **Veterinary Assistant Specialist Certificate Program with Externship**

Course Code: AU-VET  
Program Duration: 6 Months  
Course Contact Hours: 480  
Student Tuition: \$3,850

#### **The Veterinary Assistant Specialist**

The Veterinary Assistant course prepares students for a new career in the field of veterinary medicine. Students will learn about the care of animals as well as how to recognize signs of illness and disease in a variety of animals from common pets to exotic species. This course also covers interpersonal communication, interaction with clients and their animals, as well as how to assist the veterinarian during examinations. Administrative duties, such as fee collection, banking, and accounts payable are also emphasized to provide the student with the skills necessary to maintain an efficient front office. This veterinary assisting course is a vital asset to the student who wishes to work in this exciting and rewarding career field.

#### **The Veterinary Assistant Specialist Program**

Employment of veterinary assistants and caretakers of laboratory animals is expected to grow 9 percent from 2014 to 2024, faster than average for this occupation. As more and more Americans are adopting pets, the pet population continues to increase at a steady pace. Additionally, technological and medical advancements veterinary medicine are helping to boost the our level of care for pets at a cost that used to be out of reach, further contributing to the rising demand for veterinary medicine generally, and veterinary assistants in particular. The veterinary assistant can expect to obtain a position mainly in clinics, animal hospitals and research laboratories but grooming facilities, pet day cares and boarding facilities would be in need of individuals with these skills as well.

## Education and National Certifications

- Students should have or be pursuing a high school diploma or GED.
- There are no state approval and/or state requirements associated with this program.
- There is a National Certification exam available to students who successfully complete this program:
  - **Medical Career Assessments (MedCA) Veterinary Assistant (VA1)**
  - **National Career Certification Board (NCCB) Certified Animal Care Worker (CACW) Exam**
  - **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Certification Exam**

## Program Objectives

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

- Explain a medical term in terms of prefix, word root, combining forms, and suffixes
- Define general medical terms and abbreviations used veterinary medicine
- Define veterinary medical terms and abbreviations that apply to each body system including those for anatomy, physiology, diagnostic procedures, and pathological conditions
- Define terms that describe body parts and anatomy specific to various species of animals
- Define common terms that denote sex, age, birthing, grouping, and descriptions of animals
- Define veterinary medical terms and abbreviations associated with examination, pharmacology, pathology, surgery, dissection, and laboratory procedures
- Define specific veterinary terms and abbreviations used to describe canines, felines, equine, ruminants, swine, birds, and other species
- Explain the foundations of veterinary practice in terms of ethical, legal, safety, practice management, and professional communication
- Explain the concepts associated with veterinary diagnostics and therapeutics
- Explain the concepts for animal nursing care and husbandry for different species

## National Certification

Upon successful completion of the Auburn University Veterinary Assistant course, students would be eligible to sit for Veterinary Assistant (VA1) from the Medical Career Assessments (MedCA) or Certified Animal Care Worker (CACW) from the National Career Certification Board (NCCB) Designation Exam as well as the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. Although there are no state approval, state registration or other state requirements for this program, students who complete this program at Auburn University will be prepared and are eligible to sit for these national certification exams. Students who complete this program are encouraged to complete the externship option with their program. Students who complete this program can and do sit for the MedCA VA1, NCCB CACW and MOS national certification exams and are qualified, eligible and prepared to do so. Auburn University works with each student to complete the exam application and register the student to take their national certification exam.

## Externship / Hands on Training / Practicum

Although not a requirement, once students complete the program, they have the ability to participate in an externship and/or hands on practicum so as to practice the skills necessary to perform the job requirements of a professional in this field. Students will be assisted with completing a resume and/or other requirements necessary to work in this field. All students who complete this program are eligible to participate in an externship and will be placed with a participating organization near their location. Auburn University works with national organizations and has the ability to place students in externship opportunities nationwide.

**Auburn University contact:** If students have any questions regarding this program including national certification and externships, **they should call Shavon Williams of Auburn University at | 334-844-3108 or via email at [szw0063@auburn.edu](mailto:szw0063@auburn.edu)**

Note: No refunds can be issued after the start date published in your Financial Award document.

## About Auburn University!

**Welcome to Auburn University!** Auburn University was established in 1856 as the East Alabama Male College, 20 years after the city of Auburn's founding.

**OUR MISSION:** The Office of Professional and Continuing Education (OPCE) makes the educational resources of Auburn University available for non-credit education programs and conferences designed to promote lifelong learning, regardless of age, interest, or location. Our programs fall into five general categories: Professional Development, Certificate Programs, Personal Enrichment, Summer Youth Programs, and Conferences.

<http://www.auburn.edu/mycaa>



### Auburn University and Pearson Education

The Auburn University's Office of Professional and Continuing Education eLearning programs were developed in partnership with Pearson Education to produce the highest quality, best-in-class content and delivery necessary to enhance the overall student learning experience, boost understanding and ensure retention. Pearson Education is the premier content and learning company in North America offering solutions to the higher education and career training divisions of colleges and universities across the country aimed at driving quality education programs to ensure student success. Please visit us at [www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com).

### About Pearson Education

Welcome to Pearson. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. We are the world's leading learning company, with 40,000 employees in more than 80 countries helping people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives. We provide a range of education products and services to institutions, governments and direct to individual learners, that help people everywhere aim higher and fulfil their true potential. Our commitment to them requires a holistic approach to education. It begins by using research to understand what sort of learning works best, it continues by bringing together people and organizations to develop ideas, and it comes back round by measuring the outcomes of our products.

**Veterinary Assistant Specialist Program Detailed Student Outline:****Basic Medical Terminology**

- Identify the word parts that make up a medical term
- Define the common word parts used in medical and veterinary terminology
- Explain the importance of proper pronunciation and correct spelling in medical fields
- Define commonly used medical and veterinary terminology associated with numbering
- Define terms used for body position, location, and movement for animals
- Explain the structure and function of the cell
- Define terminology associated with body tissues and systems

**The Musculoskeletal System**

- Describe the anatomy and physiology of each body system
- Describe terms used to describe diagnostic procedures, pathological conditions, and therapeutic procedures of each body system

**Common Animal Terms and Animal Names**

- Define terms that describe body parts and anatomical landmarks specific to horses, cattle, goats, sheep, swine, dogs, and cats
- Define common terms denoting sex, age, birthing, grouping, and general descriptions of dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs, mice and rats, parrot and parrot-like birds, turkeys, chicken, geese, ostrich-related animals, swine, equine, sheep, goats, llama-related animals, cattle, and deer-related animals

**The Gastrointestinal System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the mouth
- Anatomy and physiology of the pharynx, gullet, and stomach
- Anatomy and physiology of the intestines and accessory organs
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the digestive system
- Describe terms used to describe diagnostic procedures, pathological conditions, and therapeutic procedures of each body system

**The Urinary System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the urinary system
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the urinary system

**The Cardiovascular System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the heart and blood vessels
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the cardiovascular system

**The Respiratory System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the respiratory system
- Breathing
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the respiratory system

**The Integumentary System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the integumentary system
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the integumentary system

**The Endocrine System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the endocrine system
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the endocrine system

**The Reproductive System**

- Anatomy and physiology of the male reproductive system
- Anatomy and physiology of the female reproductive system
- The estrous cycle, mating, and pregnancy
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the reproductive system

**The Nervous System and Special Senses**

- Anatomy and physiology of nerve cells and tissues
- Anatomy and physiology of the nervous system
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the nervous system
- Describe terms used to describe diagnostic procedures, pathological conditions, and therapeutic procedures of each body system
- Anatomy and physiology of the eye and ear
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the eye and ear

**Blood, The Lymphatic System, and immunity**

- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the blood
- Anatomy and physiology of the lymphatic system
- Explain how immunity works in the body
- Terms for testing, pathology, and procedures of the lymphatic and immune systems
- Describe terms used to describe diagnostic procedures, pathological conditions

**Testing, Pharmacology, and Surgery Terminology**

- Define the terms associated with conducting a physical examination of an animal
- Define the terms associated with common laboratory procedures in veterinary medicine
- Define terms associated with common pathogens and diseases of animals
- Define common terms associated with endoscopy and imaging
- Define common terms associated with pharmacology
- Define common terms associated with surgery

**Veterinary Concepts for Canines and Felines**

- Define terms and abbreviations associated with canines, felines, birds, ratites, reptiles, and amphibians

**Veterinary Concepts for Equine**

- Define terms and abbreviations associated with livestock
- Equine equipment and management

**Veterinary Concepts for Ruminants**

- Ruminant terminology
- Define terms and abbreviations associated with milk, feeding, and vaccination of ruminants
- Goat, Sheep, and Camelid terminology

### **Veterinary Concepts for Swine**

- Swine terminology and abbreviations
- Explain vaccinations used for pigs
- Swine management

### **Veterinary Concepts for Birds and Other Species**

- Bird anatomy and physiology
- Poultry terminology
- Pet bird and ratite terminology
- Terminology for laboratory animals and pocket pets
- Define terms and abbreviations associated with rodents, ferrets, rabbits, pocket pets, and laboratory animals
- Terminology for reptiles and amphibians

### **Veterinary Professional, Legal, Ethical, Safety, and Communication Issues**

- Explain the various positions, credentialing, and career opportunities within the veterinary medicine arena
- Ethics and laws in veterinary medicine
- Explain common ethical, legal, and safety issues associated with veterinary medicine
- Safety in veterinary medicine
- Describe important communication skills that should be used in the veterinary environment with coworkers and clients
- Explain human-animal bonding and grief including how to communicate with a client who is experiencing grief

### **Veterinary Practice**

- Explain the processes and procedures used in management of a veterinary practice
- Practice management

### **Diagnostic Imaging**

- Describe the use of x-ray technology for veterinary diagnostics including quality control, x-ray procedures, and safety
- Describe endoscopy and other imaging diagnostic procedures
- Other Types of Imaging

### **Veterinary Laboratory Techniques**

- Describe laboratory equipment, safety, and procedures for common hematology and hemostasis tests
- Describe the clinical chemistry and serology laboratory equipment and procedures for animals

### **The Study of Pathogens**

- Describe the various diagnostic procedures used to study pathogens including lab equipment and safety precautions
- Describe the procedures, equipment, and purposes involved in urinalysis
- Describe the common internal and external parasites of domestic animals including the procedures for diagnosing them

**Pharmacology and Pharmacy**

- Drug names, forms, and prescriptions
- Explain the concepts of pharmacology including the various categories of drugs and their clinical uses, dosage forms, dosages, routes of drug administration, drug action, and safe storage and handling of drugs

**Pathology, Response to Disease, and Prevention**

- Describe common pathogens that affect domestic animals including associated terminology, specific pathogens, the body's response to pathogens, associated diseases, and preventative measures

**Wounds, Fractures, and Injuries**

- Wound Closure, Bandaging, and Immobilization
- Explain the process of wound healing including how to manage a wound so that it heals properly
- Management of Specific Wounds

**Anesthesia, Analgesia, and Anesthetic Nursing**

- Veterinary anesthesia fundamentals
- Explain the veterinary use of anesthesia and analgesics

**Surgery**

- Explain common terms, equipment, and procedures associated with surgical nursing of animals
- Explain the concepts and procedures associated with asepsis and maintenance of equipment
- Explain how to properly assist with surgery

**Fluid Therapy and Blood Transfusion**

- Explain the concepts, procedures, and precautions related to fluid therapy and blood transfusions
- Blood collection, storage, and transfusion

**Emergencies and Critical Care**

- Explain how to prepare for and handle veterinary emergencies
- Veterinary critical care

**Dentistry**

- Oral anatomy and periodontal disease
- Describe veterinary dental issues including related care and preventive procedures
- Dental equipment and procedures

**Physical Therapy, Rehabilitation, and Complementary Medicine**

- Describe the goals and procedures of physical therapy, rehabilitation, and complementary medicine

**Animal Management**

- Animal Behavior
- Describe strategies for restraining and handling various types of animals

- Restraining and handling dogs, cats, and small mammals
- Restraining and handling horses
- Restraining and handling cattle, goats, sheep, and pigs

### **Patient History and Physical Examination**

- Client relations and patient history
- Explain how to take a patient history and perform a physical examination

### **Nutrition**

- Explain the nutrition needs, feeding procedures, considerations, and peculiarities of nutritional needs for different animals
- Nutrition and feeding of livestock

### **Nursing Care of Dogs and Cats**

- Describe the procedures and considerations for nursing care of various types of animals
- Medication administration
- Nursing care in specific situations
- Nursing care for geriatric patients

### **Nursing Care of Horses**

- General nursing care for horses
- Bandaging horses
- Collecting blood and administering medications

### **Nursing Care of Food Animals, Camelids, and Ratites**

- General nursing care for cattle, sheep, goats, and swine
- Common diagnostic and therapeutic techniques
- Nursing care for camelids
- Nursing care for ratites

### **Nursing Care of Companion Birds, Reptiles, and Amphibians**

- Bird anatomy
- Basic pet bird behavior, client education, and physical examination of birds
- Describe the procedures and considerations for nursing care of various types of animals
- Diagnostic techniques, husbandry responsibilities, and bird anesthesia
- Common bird emergencies and presentations
- Handling and diagnostic techniques for reptiles
- General nursing for reptiles and amphibians
- Explain the nutrition needs, feeding procedures, considerations, and peculiarities of nutritional needs for different animals
- Explain how to take a patient history and perform a physical examination

### **Nursing Care of Orphaned and Injured Wild Animals**

- Capturing, restraining, and caring for wild animals
- Describe the procedures and considerations for care of wild and laboratory animals
- Sample collection and diagnostic techniques for wild animals
- Administering medications and fluids
- Supportive and nursing care of wild animals
- Rehabilitation and ethical treatment of wild animals



- Addressing common diseases and injuries in wild animals

### **Nursing Care of Laboratory Animals**

- Veterinary issues related to laboratory animals
- Housing and caring for various types of laboratory animals

**Note:** This program can be completed in 6 months. However, students will have online access to this program for a 24-month period.

### **MICROSOFT OFFICE Module**

- Use an integrated software package, specifically the applications included in the Microsoft Office suite
- Demonstrate marketable skills for enhanced employment opportunities
- Describe proper computer techniques for designing and producing various types of documents
- Demonstrate the common commands & techniques used in Windows desktop
- List the meaning of basic PC acronyms like MHz, MB, KB, HD and RAM
- Use WordPad and MSWord to create various types of documents
- Create headings and titles with Word Art
- Create and format spreadsheets, including the use of mathematical formulas
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of computer database functions, including putting, processing, querying and outputting data
- Define computer terminology in definition matching quizzes
- Use the Windows Paint program to alter graphics
- Use a presentation application to create a presentation with both text and graphics
- Copy data from one MS Office application to another application in the suite
- Use e-mail and the Internet to send Word and Excel file attachments
- Demonstrate how to use the Windows Taskbar and Windows Tooltips
- Explain how copyright laws pertain to data and graphics posted on the Internet
- Take the college computer competency test after course completion
- Follow oral and written directions and complete assignments when working under time limitations

**Note:** Although the Microsoft Office Module is not required to successfully complete this program, students interested in pursuing free Microsoft MOS certification may want to consider completing this Microsoft Office Module at no additional cost.

## **System Requirements:**

### **Windows Users:**

- Windows 8, 7, XP or Vista
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Internet Explorer

### **Mac OS User:**

- Mac OS X or higher (in classic mode)
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Apple Safari

### **iPad Users:**

- Due to Flash limitations, eLearning programs are NOT compatible with iPads

### **Screen Resolution:**

- We recommend setting your screen resolution to 1024 x 768 pixels.

### **Browser Requirements:**

- System will support the two latest releases of each browser. When using older versions of a browser, users risk running into problems with the course software.
- Windows Users: Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Mac OS Users: Safari, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox

### **Suggested Plug-ins:**

- Flash Player
- Real Player
- Adobe Reader
- Java