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Introduction

This handbook is to assist the student with common protocols with in the Veterinary Technology Program. It does not replace or supersede the Murray State College Student Handbook but is in addition to.

The Murray State College Veterinary Technology curriculum is fast-paced and highly integrated. For this reason, a specific course sequence for completion of the program has been designed to insure each student acquires the skills needed to be successful in this career in a timely fashion. To successfully complete the program objectives, a full-time academic commitment is necessary.

To be successful in the program, students must learn ***time management*** skills beginning the first week of classes. In general, students should schedule three hours of preparation, study and review time for every one hour of lecture instruction and one hour of preparation, study and review time for every one hour of laboratory instruction. This may seem difficult to do at first, but it is necessary for the highest level of success in the program.

Students in the program should take advantage of the many services available on the Murray State College campus. Your classmates and, students in the class ahead of you are available to help you be successful in your studies. Finally, do not hesitate to seek assistance from our program faculty...view your instructors as a resource and be aware that they “stand ready” to assist you. The veterinary technology instructors believe that the student is the reason we are here. Never forget, however, that you play a very important part in your own success. **Learning is an active process, in which the learner must do the learning.**

Program success is all about preparation, dedication, and commitment. But ***attitude*** is just as important as skill acquisition. Without kindness and caring, you may be an excellent healthcare provider, but not an excellent veterinary technician. The animal needs you, the owner needs you, and your colleagues need you to be a team player and pursue the best in all you do. So do your best to be professionally courteous at all times, feel good about yourself and what you have accomplished as you end each day and embrace the new challenges tomorrow will bring.

Hands-on animal experience is obtained through local animal shelters, college farm, private farms and employees of Murray State College. All students are expected to participate in the care, handling and nursing management of a wide variety of species including small, large, exotic, and laboratory animal species. Cadavers, preserved, and unpreserved animals and animal tissues will be used for training purposes. Though it is rare, in some instances animals may be euthanized during teaching laboratories,

however, the program adheres to the policies and procedures outlined in the Animal Welfare Act at all times when using animals for training purposes.

Philosophy of the Veterinary Technology Program

The mission of the Murray State College Veterinary Technology program is to produce graduates who will be credentialed professional members of the Veterinary Medical Team. Successful Veterinary Technology students will meet the educational goals of the program by demonstrating:

- ❖ Communicate effectively with both professional staff and clients concerning patient care.
- ❖ Provide and document patient nursing care and treatment.
- ❖ Proficient in the skills required of entry-level degreed Veterinary Technicians.
- ❖ Functions as a self-directing, accountable member of the veterinary profession.
- ❖ Practices within the ethical and legal framework of veterinary technology.
- ❖ Successful completion of State and National Board Examinations.

Successful graduates will become excellent providers of quality health care for animals and outstanding members of society.

Murray State College offers four semesters plus one summer session in the Veterinary Technology program that leads to an Associate of Applied Science degree. The program has full accreditation by the American Veterinary Medical Association. Graduates are eligible to sit for state and national board examinations.

Associate degree Veterinary Technology programs:

1. Require two years to complete.
2. Combine Veterinary Technology theory and skills with college level general education courses in the arts and sciences.
3. Produce graduates that are well-rounded individuals.
4. Are conducted by institutions of higher education.

The mission of Murray State College is to provide opportunities for student learning, personal growth, professional success, and community enhancement. The Veterinary Technology program is an integral part of Murray State College; therefore, it functions within the philosophy and purposes of the college.

Employment opportunities for Veterinary Technicians are numerous, varied, and may include:

1. Providing professional assistance to veterinarians, biological researchers, scientists, animal control and humane organizations.
2. Duties accomplished in compliance with federal, state, and local laws. These duties shall not include diagnosing, prescribing, or performing surgery.
3. The care and handling of animals, knowledge of their normal and abnormal life processes, medical and surgical nursing, anesthesiology, radiography, and clinical laboratory procedures.

Students should be aware that employment opportunities and compensation vary widely and are influenced by geographic location and type of employer.

We welcome you to the Veterinary Technology Program and look forward to guiding your educational journey over the next two years!

Essential Job Requirements and Technical Standards for Veterinary Technicians (US Department of Labor)

Veterinary Technicians are expected to:

1. Have a personality suited to exhibit respect, concern, and compassion for both animals and humans.
2. Possess the capacity to make independent decisions, work unsupervised, be creative, adaptable, and resourceful. Believe in the highest standards of care and uphold the values of personal responsibility, honesty, integrity, ethical behavior, trust and professionalism.
3. Have the ability to tolerate walking and standing for sustained and prolonged periods of time (85% of workday).
4. Be capable of lifting from floor to waist level and/or carrying up to 40 pounds unassisted frequently, and up to 50 pounds or more with assistance occasionally.
5. Have the ability to bend over at the waist, twist the trunk, squat, kneel, reach above the head, and have sufficient grip strength. Have the body size, conformation and fitness to do the physical work required of a technician.
6. Be amenable to learning to safely handle, restrain, and work with any species of domestic and exotic animals that may be sick, injured, fractious, or aggressive without fear.
7. Possess the willingness to assist with or perform a wide variety of routine medical, surgical, and diagnostic procedures common to the veterinary setting; including humane euthanasia.
8. Be open to performing routine cleaning and janitorial duties including using brooms, brushes, hoses, and various cleaning products (detergents, disinfectants), garden supplies and implements.
9. Have an understanding of the requirement to work with and around dangerous animals, hazardous chemicals, compressed gasses, pharmaceuticals, sharp objects, radiation, and biohazards.
10. Have an aptitude for science requiring attention to detail, careful observation, and accurate record keeping.
11. Have the capacity to perform arithmetic and simple mathematical calculations. Be capable of learning to operate and maintain a variety of medical diagnostic and therapeutic equipment.
12. Be competent in effective verbal and written communication in spoken and written English.
13. Have the capacity to read and hear, understand, and quickly execute complex verbal and written instructions given in English.
14. Possess eyesight capable of viewing small visual images, use a microscope and read instrumentation.

15. Veterinary technicians will work both indoors and outdoors in all weather conditions during both daylight and after dark. Long hours, shift work, stressful and sometimes emotionally charged, situations are common in this fast-paced profession.
16. Registered Veterinary Technicians will work in the capacity of a licensed veterinary medical professional and will have daily interactions with doctors, other technicians, support staff, clients and patients.
17. The technician will assume many different roles during a workday (receptionist, technical assistant, nurse, kennel attendant, janitor, counselor, etc.) and will interact with an endless variety of people, animals and challenging clinical and interpersonal situations.
18. There will be frequent exposure to loud noise, odors, animal pain and suffering, invasive medical, surgical, and diagnostic procedures, dangerous animals, sharp objects, hazardous chemicals, compressed gasses, pharmaceuticals (including controlled substances), radiation and biohazards during the routine practice of veterinary medicine.
19. There will be constant exposure to animal hair, dander and many other potential allergens.

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We make these phone numbers available to students so you are able to reach us after regular working hours and on weekends IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY. Please use discretion and remember your telephone etiquette should you need to call one of us. If you have an animal emergency, you need to call your veterinarian.

GRADUATION ADVISOR LIST

Graduation advisors for Veterinary Technology and Veterinary Assistant students are assigned by student's last name.

A – F = Christen Puckett-Smith, BS, RVT
G – M = Debbie Reed, BS, RVT
N – S = Laura Sandmann, BS, RVT
T – Z = Dr. Tyler

All students who wish to continue their education for Pre-Veterinary Medicine, Ms. Laura Sandmann, BS, RVT (A-M) and Dr. Tyler (N-Z) will be your graduation advisors.

Veterinary Technology General Guidelines

Commitment to the Veterinary Technology Program

Veterinary Technology is a challenging two-year program that requires a **tremendous amount of time** and must be the student's top priority if they are to be successful. Students who cannot devote the required time and effort should consider reapplying to the program at a later date.

Professionalism

Professionalism is a valuable part of your training and you are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. Professionalism includes appearance, written and spoken communication, and behavior.

Veterinary Technology Dress Code

Personal Grooming

- Daily bathing and deodorant use is required and be mindful that perfume/cologne should be applied sparingly.
- Hair should be neat and clean and secured away from the face.
- Neatly trimmed beards or mustaches are acceptable, otherwise, close shaves are expected.

Professional Appearance

- Long dangling earrings and open plugs are dangerous and are not acceptable, nor are other obvious body piercings (while in the Veterinary Technology building or during Continuing Education, Service Learning and Career Exploration trips).
- Hair must be of a natural hair color.
- All students are required to wear clean and wrinkle free scrubs with pants of appropriate length (not dragging the ground) at all times while in the Veterinary Technology building and on externship.
 - You are required to wear under shirts if your scrubs do not cover your body properly.
 - During the winter, shirts may be worn **under** scrubs or a lab coat may be worn **over** scrubs. You **are not to wear** jackets, hoodies, sweatshirts, etc. over your scrubs.
- Veterinary Assistant – Heather Gray
- Freshmen VT-Burgundy (maroon/wine)
- Sophomore VT – Hunter (green)
- Lab Coats may be of any color but **NOT white**.
- Name badges are worn on the left side.
- Closed toe/closed heel shoes at all times.
- No hats or caps are to be worn during classes.

- Laboratory coats are required in Clinical Pathology I & II.
- Large animal labs require dark blue coveralls and boots or rubber boots over your shoes.

Casual Dress

Fridays are casual days and students may wear any color scrubs.

Official Dress

Attire for trips or at other times when requested by faculty, will be a Veterinary Technology Polo shirt with black slacks (one polo shirt will be provided for each student; you will need to buy a pair of black slacks). Both shirt and slacks must be clean and pressed, with clean shoes. You are representing not only yourself, but also your classmates and the Murray State College Veterinary Technology Program.

Action Plan for Non-compliance

- **First offense:** Student will be dismissed from class.
- **Second offense:** Student will be dismissed from classes for the day. Student will attend a meeting with Directors of the program and faculty/staff and be placed on probation.
- **Third offense:** Dismissal from the program.

Attendance & Tardiness

Regular attendance is essential to optimum academic achievement. Therefore, students are expected to be on time and to attend every meeting of courses in which he or she is enrolled. Absences in excess of one hour per course hour enrolled are considered sufficient to seriously affect academic achievement in class. Whenever any student's absences are so excessive that, in the judgment of the instructor, a satisfactory degree of progress cannot be expected, the student may be administratively withdrawn from the class. Arriving late to class is disruptive and shows a lack of respect for your classmates and instructors. Habitual tardiness may adversely affect your grade. Doors may be locked at the beginning of class.

Students involved in school activities may have "excused absences"; however, an absence classified as an "excused absence" does not excuse the student from class work or assignments on those "excused absence" days. In these cases, students are encouraged to make arrangements with their instructor; prior to the day they will be absent to complete any assignment. In some instances, "excused absences" will be excessive enough to prevent reasonable achievement in the Veterinary Technology Program, in which case it may be advisable for you to plan to reapply to the program at a later time.

Each student should place emphasis on developing a sense of responsibility for his/her education. Students are held accountable for all work covered in the course despite valid reasons for absenteeism. It is the student's responsibility to contact class members to acquire notes, discuss missed material and practice missed lab

skills. The faculty member is not responsible for sending any missed assignments, handouts or other course documents.

The development of learning teams is encouraged. Working together in groups is a helpful way of checking your understanding of material as well as providing support if absents are unavoidable. Each student should work on skills of learning and sharing in study groups to enhance their potential for success in the program and their success in the profession.

Please remember that absence from class or not being prepared on the day an assignment is due, does not automatically mean that the work may be made up or handed in late, this is at the discretion of the instructor.

Grading

The following scale is used for all Veterinary Technology courses:

A =	90-100
B =	80-89
C =	75-79

Grades will not be based on a curve.

A grade below "C" is not passing. You must have a "C" in all Veterinary Technology courses in order to continue in the program.

Hospital Rounds

All students will be assigned Hospital Rounds which will count toward their grade in several different classes. You will also receive a copy of the Veterinary Technology Hospital Protocols. Students are expected to complete all duties assigned to them, if an emergency prevents a student from completing their hospital rounds, they should make arrangements with a classmate who can complete the duties for them, and should notify the instructor of the arrangements that have been made. However, students finding themselves in a situation that repeatedly prevents them from completing their assigned duties may be dropped from the program due to excessive absences.

When there are animals in the clinic to be cared for they are the first priority. Animals are to be exercised, fed and watered and treatments administered. There is a zero tolerance policy for students who do not properly care for animals and this will be reflected in the grade you receive for hospital rounds.

Skills Lab

Skills labs are designed to provide students opportunities to practice clinical skills with instructors. **Skills labs are highly encouraged but are not mandatory unless a student makes below a 75% on a practicum, then they will be required to attend**

skills lab. This is an extra effort to make sure all students are given every chance to proficiently perform all AVMA essential skills. Students are assigned specific dates and times to attend skills labs which allows time for every student to have the opportunity to participate. These schedules are strictly enforced.

Continuing Education, Service Learning and Career Exploration Trips

Continuing education is an essential part of the veterinary technician's career and we strongly encourage your participation and commitment to lifelong learning.

Sophomore students are required to attend the Southwest Veterinary Symposium, service learning trip, held in Texas during the fall semester where they will be responsible for the preparation and set up of all interactive labs. A Continuing Education trip will be during the spring semester and sophomores are required to attend. There will also be some career exploration trips that will necessitate missing other classes. The Vice-President for Academic Affairs will give you an excused absence from these classes, however, **this does not relieve you of your responsibility to make arrangements with the instructors in advance and comply with all of their make-up policies.** There will be several out of state & overnight trips during the sophomore year. The cost for these trips are included in your class/lab fees; however, you will need personal spending money.

In order for students to attend continuing education symposiums, conventions, service learning and career exploration trips the student must have a passing grade of 75% or above in all courses that a student is enrolled in at that time. If a student has excessive absences/tardiness the student will not be permitted on trips.

These trips are course assignments. If the student does not attend they will receive a zero on those assignments and all fees associated with it will be forfeited.

Alcohol use is not allowed while participating in Veterinary Technology field trips.

Externship

The externship course (VT 2336) is a 6 credit hour course the summer semester following your sophomore year. You will participate in graduation ceremonies in May prior to your externship but will not receive your diploma until after completion of VT 2336. It is an eight-week occupational experience afforded by cooperative effort between Murray State College and approved veterinary medical or allied establishment. You will be assigned an externship site by the Veterinary Technology Program Director.

Please remember that this course is a requirement for completion of the Veterinary Technology Program. Externship sites will not all be within driving distance of your home, so you should start making plans now for family, work and other obligations during the eight-week externship period.

Externship sites are asked to provide housing for students if the veterinarian is not within driving distance of the student's home.

While on externship you will abide by all Murray State College student policies and the individual Veterinary Hospital or allied establishment policies.

The externship is not a job. Some veterinarians choose to designate the Veterinary Technician students as summer employees and to pay them. Others will provide a stipend for food and living expenses, while some do not do either. This is totally at the discretion of the veterinarian.

State and National Board Exams

After successfully completing the Veterinary Technology program and graduating from Murray State College, you must pass both National and State Board Examinations in order to become licensed as a Registered Veterinary Technician. In Oklahoma, the deadline for registration is April 1st of your sophomore year. Currently the cost for the National and State exam in Oklahoma is \$445.00 (\$320.00 to AAVSB and \$130.00 to OBVME).

There are also several on-line review courses available during your sophomore year. An on-line review course will be one of your assignments during your externship (the cost of the course will be included as a lab fee for the externship course).

Student Organizations

Participation in veterinary technician organizations is strongly encouraged. Students receive membership in the Student Chapter of the National Association of Veterinary Technicians of America while they are attending Murray State College. It is highly recommended students become members of the Oklahoma Veterinary Technician Association (dues are \$5.00 per year).

Veterinary Services

Murray State College Veterinary Technology provides limited veterinary services for college employees and student owned animals. These services are performed on an appointment basis only. We **are not** able to see emergency calls.

Parking/Vehicles

The designated parking area for Veterinary Technology students is along the fence, south of the Sycamore tree in front of the building and the parking area south of the county fair barn. Student parking is not allowed directly in front of the building, along the driveway or behind the building.

The speed limit on all roads around the Veterinary Technology building is 10 mph.

General Information

Murray State College is committed to providing equal access to College programs and services for all students. Under College policy and federal and state laws, students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations to ensure the student has an equal opportunity to perform in class. If any member of the class has such a disability and needs special academic accommodation, please report to the Counseling Center, MSC or AHEC, before the end of week one of the semester. Reasonable accommodation may be arranged after verification of your situation. Do not hesitate to contact the registrar if any assistance is needed in this process.

Proper Communication Channels

Students should follow proper communication channels when they have disagreements or problems related to the Veterinary Technology Program. The proper order is instructor (or person with whom they have the disagreement), VT program Co-Director/s, Department Chair (Phillip Morton- 580-387-7507), Dean of Instruction (Ginger Cothran – 580-387-7112), VP of Academic Affairs (Becky Henthorn – 580-387-7181). Unresolved grievance would follow the formal grievance policy (see college catalog). Students may also complete the “Student Issues Concerns Form” and submit through the Office of Student Affairs.

Tutoring

MSC Professional tutoring is available for Math, Science, and English/Writing. Veterinary Technology course tutoring is available by special arrangement. Students must contact Veterinary Technology faculty to schedule specific tutoring times.

Computer Use

The computer and printer in the student resource area is available for student use; however other computers in the Veterinary Technology building are **not** available for student use. If you have an assignment that requires you to use the multimedia classrooms (computer, document camera, LCD projector, etc.) please work with your instructor to schedule a time to practice. The multimedia classroom computers are **not** to be used for checking personal e-mail. Computers are available in the Library (Library hours are 7:30 am to 8:30 pm Monday through Thursday, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm Friday, and 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm on Sunday). The Computer Lab will also have computers available during most of the same hours that the Library is open; however, Computer Lab hours will be affected by classes scheduled there and by the

availability of student workers. Most Veterinary Technology assignments are required to be typewritten and it is very helpful for students to have a personal computer and printer.

Copies

There is a printer for student use in the Veterinary Technology student resource room. This is for minimal use only. If you need copies for a class project, please contact an instructor. Personal copies may be made at the campus copy center and a fee schedule is available there.

Wi-Fi

There is Wi-Fi access in the Veterinary Technology building and in several places on campus.

Food and Drink

Eating and drinking is not allowed in the laboratories. It is the responsibility of students to keep trash (pop cans, candy wrappers, etc.) picked up in the classrooms.

Tobacco Use

Effective August 6, 2012 (Per Oklahoma Governor's Executive Order 2012-01) the use of tobacco products (tobacco/vapors/e-cigarettes) is prohibited on any property owned, leased or contracted for use by the State of Oklahoma including state owned vehicles. There are no designated smoking or tobacco use areas on our campus including roads and parking lots.

Building Access

Front door keys will be issued to each student and will permit access from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm-Monday through Friday. Students who lose their key will be responsible for purchasing a replacement key at a cost of **\$150.00**.

Building Access after Hours

Due to safety and security concerns only work-study students are allowed to be in the building after hours and on weekends. Non-students are not allowed in the building after hours and on weekends.

Dismissal from the Program

A student may be dismissed from the Veterinary Technology Program for:

1. Failure to complete any of the Veterinary Technology courses at a satisfactory level. This includes clinical components and skills performance in those courses that include lab components and skill activities.
2. Violation of the Veterinary Technology Program Policies as listed in this Student Handbook and also the Murray State College Disciplinary Rules and Regulations (see Student Handbook, Computer Use policy located on the MSC web site).
3. Commission and/or conviction of any infraction that would violate the Oklahoma Veterinary Practice Act or the Rules and Regulations Relating to the practice of Veterinary Technology in the State of Oklahoma, specifically:

- a. *Fraud, misrepresentation or deception –cheating on examinations or written work including attempting to gain an advantage by inappropriate means. (See Academic Integrity Policy located in MSC Student Handbook).*
 - b. *Adjudicated to be incompetent.*
 - c. *Use of advertising, or solicitation which is false, misleading or as otherwise deemed unprofessional under the regulations promulgated by the Board.*
 - d. *Conviction of a felony.*
 - e. *Incompetence, gross negligence or other malpractice in the practice of the profession- omission to do something, which the student has been taught to do. Not doing something, which a reasonable and prudent student would do under the same or similar facts and circumstances in the performance of duties within the practice of Veterinary Technology.*
 - f. *Engaging in conduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public or a demonstration of willful or careless disregard for the health, welfare, or safety of a patient.*
 - g. *Fraud or dishonesty in the application or reporting of any test or disease in animals.*
 - h. *Unprofessional conduct – Unprofessional conduct is behavior (acts, knowledge, and practices)which fails to conform to the accepted standards of the veterinary technology profession and which could jeopardize the health and welfare of the owners and patients which shall include but not be limited to the following: inaccurate recording, falsifying or altering medical records, verbally or physical abusing classmates, clients or patients, violating the confidentiality of information or knowledge concerning a patient.*
 - i. *Representing himself/herself as a doctor of veterinary medicine.*
 - j. *Violation of the Oklahoma Veterinary Technician Act.*
 - k. *Conviction of a violation of a Federal or State law regarding dangerous substances as defined by House Bill 1100 of the 1st session of the 33rd Legislature and as hereafter amended.*
4. Failure to demonstrate satisfactory performance of the following skills in both academic and clinical setting;
- a. *Following the policy of the school/clinical facility regarding dress, grooming, and cleanliness. (see dress code)*
 - b. *Following the policies of the school/clinical facility regarding attendance and tardiness.*
 - c. *Respecting the rights of those in authority to make decisions and complying with those decisions.*
 - d. *Managing personal affairs in a manner that does not interfere with professional responsibilities.*
 - e. *Respecting time limitations of others by being prepared for discussion, conferences, etc.*
 - f. *Demonstrating active listening skills (e.g., seeks clarification and confirmation, maintains eye contact, encourages dialogue, and listens intently)*
 - g. *Abiding by established chain of authority (levels of supervision and responsibility).*
 - h. *Using tact and consideration with members of the health care team, students, faculty and staff.*

- i. Using effective non-verbal communication (e.g., posture, gestures, facial expressions, touch and space).*
 - j. Maintaining composure and professional demeanor when interacting with members of the health care team, students, faculty and staff.*
 - k. Adjusting communication as appropriate for different situations.*
 - l. Using discretion regarding questions asked and/or statements made.*
 - m. Motivating others (e.g. using encouragement, praise, support, feedback and/or persuasive information).*
 - n. Setting appropriate limits and maintaining professional authority/control to others behavior.*
5. Failure to participate in the learning process by demonstration of active learning.
 - a. Not being prepared for class and not participating in class.*
 - b. Failure to access and participate in on-line components of each course at a satisfactory level.*
 - c. Failure to follow the MSC computer use policy.*
6. Failure to make satisfactory progression toward entry level in all areas of the Professional Behaviors.

Readmission to the Program

If a student that has been accepted into the Veterinary Technology program and approved to be enrolled in the Veterinary Technology Core courses and for any reason they must discontinue the program, they may be readmitted to the program in accordance with the following:

1. Student will submit a Veterinary Technology Program Application for the current year.
2. Student will only be readmitted into the Veterinary Technology Program one time.
3. Student will be required to re-take all Veterinary Technology Program Core courses.

Appeal of Course Grade and Grievance Procedure

Refer to the MSC Student handbook available on-line linked to www.mscok.edu.

Appeal procedures are subject to change in accordance with college policy.

Student Health and Safety

Aggressive Animal Policy

It is the policy of the veterinary technology program that aggressive animals are prohibited. The faculty and staff take every precaution to screen all animals used in teaching however, the profession of veterinary technology by nature has inherent risk. When animals are presented with unfamiliar people, places or situations, aggressive behaviors may be elicited. To minimize the likelihood of such problems occurring, the following policies are to be adhered to:

1. All dogs must be on a leash at all times. The only exception is when they are turned out in the exercise pen or when permission has been granted by a veterinary technology faculty member for a specific purpose. In such circumstances, the dog must be under direct supervision by the faculty member or his/her designee.
2. Before dogs are turned into the exercise pen they will be assessed by a faculty or staff member to determine if they can be turned out together or if they need to be turned out individually. If dogs are allowed to be turned out together a faculty or staff member must be present, the first time they are turned out. Dogs from different households will not be allowed to freely co-mingle at any time.
3. Cats must be in a kennel when entering the teaching hospital.
4. Other than standard husbandry practices, no procedure is to be performed on any animal without veterinary technology faculty or staff supervision. The level of supervision necessary will be determined by the individual in charge.
5. In the event of a dog or cat fight students are cautioned not to attempt to break up the fight but rather:
 - Put the safety of personnel first; never risk human injury. Hands, arms and legs should never be used to break up a fight between animals.
 - If a faculty or staff member is immediately present, allow them to manage the situation and remove yourself from harm's way.
 - If a faculty or staff member is not immediately present, obtain the help of a qualified individual; never attempt to break up a fight alone.
6. Dogs or cats exhibiting mild to moderate aggressive behaviors during animal care procedures will be subjected to additional restraint methodologies up to and including the fitting of a muzzle. Dogs or cats exhibiting significant aggressive behaviors will be handled by veterinary technology faculty or staff members only.
7. **If an animal exhibits any signs of aggression, kennel or enclosures signs must be placed to indicate type of aggression.**
8. Large animals exhibiting aggressive behaviors during animal care procedures will be handled by veterinary technology faculty or staff members only.

Animal Bites and Scratches Policy

It is not uncommon for personal injuries such as animal bites and scratches to occur during the course of performing common veterinary nursing procedures. If a student experiences such an injury during program activities, the student is expected to report the incident immediately to a Veterinary Technology faculty or staff member, who, with the student, will assess the situation and determine if first aid can be administered, if an off-site doctor's visit is necessary, or an emergency call to 911 should be made. Even when circumstances are such that first aid seems to be appropriate, students are always reminded they should monitor their injury and

consult their physician immediately if there is any change. Students are personally responsible for the cost of any injuries incurred in class. All injuries are reported to the Program Chairman

Animal Care and Use Concern Policy

The Murray State College Veterinary Technology program is committed to the humane care of all of the animals participating in its teaching program and complies with the regulations of the Animal Welfare Act, Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and the Guide for the Care and Use of Agriculture Animals in Research and Teaching. Uncaring or cruel behavior toward animals in the teaching program will not be tolerated under any circumstance. If you are concerned that the animals participating in animal care laboratories may be experiencing unnecessary or excessive distress or pain during or after a learning event, you are encouraged to submit your concerns to any of the following individuals:

1. Debbie Reed: Co-Director Veterinary Technology Program
2. Laura Sandmann: Co-Director Veterinary Technology Program
3. Dr. Katie Tyler: Murray State College Veterinarian
4. Becky Henthorn: Murray State College VP of Academic Affairs
5. Joy McDaniel: Murray State College President
6. Dan Moore: Murray State College IACUC member
7. Sam Holt: Murray State College IACUC member
8. Shauni Kimbro: OSU Extension Office in Tishomingo

You will not be reprimanded or discriminated against for reporting or expressing your concerns and you will be protected by applicable whistleblower policies. Your anonymity will be protected to the greatest extent possible should you request it to be held in confidence.

It is best if you first express your concern at the most immediate level, but if the solution or explanation is not satisfactory, then you can and should move “up the ladder” to express your concerns. If at any time you feel you cannot express your concerns at the most immediate level for whatever reason you are welcome to express them to a higher authority. Your concerns will be investigated and a response will be provided by the appropriate authority in a timely fashion.

Zoonotic Concerns

As veterinary medical professionals we are exposed to zoonotic diseases on a daily basis. Some of these diseases are self-limiting and not extremely serious in nature. On the other hand, some zoonotic diseases can be extremely serious to animals, people or both. A list of common zoonotic diseases is included in this handbook under **Public Health Concerns of Veterinary Technology Personnel**. Pre-exposure rabies immunization is **strongly** recommended. Students electing not to undergo pre-exposure immunization must sign a waiver. A current TB test card will be

required prior to some field trips. An initial TB test, followed by a second test 2 weeks later is required to obtain the TB test card; following the initial series one test per year is required to keep the card current (TB testing is done at student expense). Students should also be sure they are current on tetanus and any other immunizations recommended by their physician.

Pregnancy Concerns

There are certain hazards common in a veterinary hospital that could cause risks to a developing fetus. A **Protocol for Student Pregnancy** is included with this handbook.

- a. See Appendix A - Protocol for Student Pregnancy
- b. See Appendix B – Physician Visit Checklist for Pregnancy

Safety/Injury Concerns

The Veterinary Technology Staff will take every precaution to see that students are not placed in situations where injury will occur, however, in the Veterinary Technology profession there exists the possibility of traumatic injury including, but not limited to bites, kicks, and scratches. If you are unsure about how to handle a particular animal, **STOP**, and ask one of the staff for assistance.

Health Care/Illness/Injury

The Family Health Center of Southern Oklahoma (580-371-2343) will see students (\$25.00/office visit with MSC Student ID). They do not see walk-in patients, however if you will call for an appointment they can generally see you on the same day.

- a. See Appendix C - Health Status Release Form

Evacuation Plan

Included in your handbook are evacuation plans for both the first and second floor. In the event of an evacuation all students will exit the building via the nearest exit. Debbie Reed will be responsible for the freshman class and Laura Sandmann will be responsible for the sophomore class (Each will serve as back-up for the other). Both classes and the animals plus any visitors to Veterinary Technology will meet at the Johnston County Fair Barn on the east side of the Veterinary Technology building. Debbie Reed will be responsible for a final head count and the last check of the building.

Drug Testing

At the discretion of the instructor or program directors, students may be required to complete drug testing at an approved center at the student's expense.

Oklahoma Board of Veterinary Examiners-Veterinary Practice Act 775:10-7-10. Denial, suspension or revocation of a veterinary technician certificate.

Upon written complaint under oath by any person and after notice and hearing, as prescribed in the Oklahoma Veterinary Practice Act, the Board may deny, suspend for a definite period or revoke the certificate of a veterinary technician for:

- 1) *Fraud, misrepresentation or deception in obtaining a license, certificate or permit.*
- 2) *Adjudicated to be incompetent.*
- 3) *Use of advertising, or solicitation which is false, misleading or as otherwise deemed unprofessional under the regulations promulgated by the Board.*

- 4) *Conviction of a felony.*
- 5) *Incompetence, gross negligence or other malpractice in the practice of the profession.*
- 6) *Having professional association with any person practicing veterinary medicine unlawfully.*
- 7) *Engaging in conduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public or a demonstration of willful or careless disregard for the health, welfare, or safety of a patient.*
- 8) *Fraud or dishonesty in the application or reporting of any test or disease in animals.*
- 9) *Unprofessional conduct by violation of a regulation promulgated by the Board under the Oklahoma Veterinary Practice Act.*
- 10) *Representing himself/herself as a doctor of veterinary medicine.*
- 11) *Violation of the Oklahoma Veterinary Technician Act.*
- 12) *Conviction of a violation of a Federal or State law regarding dangerous substances as defined by House Bill 1100 of the 1st session of the 33rd Legislature and as hereafter amended.*

Public Health Concerns of Veterinary Technology Personnel

A disease that is transmitted between animals and people is called a **zoonotic disease**. There are many zoonotic diseases that have been known since ancient times, and more is being learned daily about other zoonotic diseases that have occurred fairly recently, such as Hantavirus, Ebola, Lyme disease and West Nile virus. As veterinary medical professionals we are exposed to zoonotic diseases on a daily basis. Some of these diseases are self-limiting and are not extremely serious in nature. On the other hand, some zoonotic diseases can be extremely serious to animals, people or both.

The purpose of this list is to provide an outline of information regarding some of the more common zoonotic diseases one may encounter in veterinary medicine and enable the veterinary technician student to assess situations in which these diseases can be avoided or prevented.

Rabies is a deadly viral disease carried in the saliva of an infected animal. Animals become infected by being bitten by a previously infected animal. The rabies virus has an affinity for the central nervous system. Animals with the disease may act differently than normal—a wild animal, for example, may seem tame. Although some animals show a “furious” form of the disease, we may never know if a pet dog is infected with rabies until it’s too late. Animals that have rabies are not infective until the virus replicates, an event that occurs in the salivary glands about 7 days before the death of the animal (hence, the 10-day quarantine period). But the incubation period for rabies can be extremely long—sometimes up to 6 months. Oklahoma is endemic for rabies; the disease occurs naturally in some wild animal populations in our state. There is no cure for rabies and it is invariably fatal. Humans that are employed in high-risk professions (like veterinarians and veterinary technicians) can receive pre-exposure vaccination for the disease. This is a series of 3 vaccinations that will protect you from contracting rabies for a minimum of two years, after which single boosters may be administered. For people without the pre-exposure vaccinations, preventative post-exposure treatment consists of a series of 5 vaccinations with human diploid cell vaccine.

Tetanus is a deadly disease caused by the bacteria *Clostridium tetani*. This bacterium is able to form spores in the soil and can replicate under anaerobic (without air) conditions. Whenever deep wounds occur, such as bite wounds or other puncture wounds, the bacteria can replicate and can ultimately cause continuous muscular spasms in humans that can terminate as fatal asphyxia. Incubation for tetanus is 3-21 days. Tetanus is easily prevented with tetanus toxoid (vaccine). Tetanus rarely occurs in fully immunized persons within 10 years of their last vaccination.

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease caused by a spirochete—a corkscrew-shaped organism. While most mammals are susceptible to leptospirosis, our principal concern centers on dogs carrying this disease to humans. Humans usually contract the disease by contact with infected urine. While leptospirosis does not frequently occur, people working with infected animals should wear gloves and goggles when handling animals diagnosed with the disease. There is no human vaccine for this disease.

Tuberculosis can be carried to humans by infected dogs, cats and cattle (although dogs are more frequently infected by human carriers). This is an extremely resistant airborne bacillus that may be fatal particularly in persons with immunodeficiency's (i.e. AIDS or chemotherapy patients). The disease causes lesions in the respiratory tract and other organs, and because it is airborne, protective masks, goggles, and gloves should be worn for prevention of disease spread. In addition, persons working with non-human primates are routinely screened radiographically to prevent spread of the disease. There is no vaccination against tuberculosis for humans in the United States.

Toxoplasmosis is a protozoal disease that normally doesn't cause anything beyond flu-like symptoms in humans who contract it. However, Toxoplasmosis can cause serious birth defects in fetuses of pregnant women exposed to the organism. It can be carried to people by cats infected with the disease; the organism is passed in the animal's feces. Pregnant women are warned to avoid contact with cat feces or soil contaminated with cat feces. There is no vaccination against this disease.

Cat Scratch Disease is another common disease hazard for veterinary health care workers. Cats that carry the organism for this disease usually show no signs of the disease themselves. Humans who contract it (from a cat scratch) may show a pustule at the site of the scratch, however, most cases present as localized swelling of lymph nodes. A low-grade fever and a feeling of malaise may accompany the swelling; however, this disease is self-limiting. There is no vaccination against Cat Scratch Disease.

Salmonellosis is a disease often associated with poor hygiene; however veterinary health care workers may encounter animals infected from filthy housing or infected food. It causes flu-like symptoms and severe diarrhea in humans. Transmission is fecal-oral so technicians dealing with suspect animals should wear protective clothing to avoid contamination with the bacterium. Suspect animals are also routinely isolated to prevent contamination of the environment and exposure of other animals. There is no routine vaccination against Salmonellosis.

Lyme's Disease is a tick-borne disease that humans share with dogs and horses. Symptoms in humans include rash, muscle ache, swollen lymph nodes, and fever. Veterinary technician students should practice surveillance for ticks on themselves, especially after working with tick-infested animals or hiking through tall weeds. Ideally, ticks should not be removed with bare fingers. There is a vaccination against Lyme disease in dogs.

Psittacosis is commonly known as parrot fever. Humans are infected with the disease by inhaling the causative organism shed from carrier birds. The disease can be life-threatening in the elderly; however, in most people it causes a sudden respiratory disease with fever. Birds with Psittacosis will show signs of pneumonia and diarrhea, often followed by death. There is no human vaccination against Psittacosis.

West Nile Virus in humans can range in severity from subclinical to encephalitis, more severe symptoms generally occur in the elderly. Humans contract the disease by being bitten by an infected mosquito; however, birds are the natural host of West Nile Virus. Humans (and horses) are "dead-end" hosts for West Nile Virus.

Ringworm is a fungal disease that occurs on the skin of animal carriers and humans. It is related to athlete's foot; despite its common name it is not parasitic. Animals may show a circular lesion typical of this disease, but many cats may be carriers and not show any signs at all. There are many treatments for this disease and it is not considered extremely serious.

Intestinal Parasites of dogs and cats may cause disease in humans. Specifically, humans can be infected with the same roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms that infect dogs and cats. This is prevented by practicing strict hygiene procedures (wearing gloves) when testing animal feces and washing your hands after handling animals.

Scabies is a highly contagious parasitic skin disease caused by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. The disease is also known as itch. It is acquired through close contact with an infested individual or contaminated clothing and is most prevalent among those living in crowded and unhygienic conditions. The female mite burrows her way into the skin, depositing eggs along the tunnel. The larvae hatch in several days and find their way into the hair follicles. Itching is most intense at night because of the nocturnal activity of the parasites. Aside from the burrows, which are usually clearly visible, there are a variety of skin lesions, many of them brought on by scratching and infection. All clothing and bedding of the victim and his household should be disinfected. Disinfestation of the skin is accomplished by applying creams or ointments containing gamma benzene hexachloride or benzyl

benzoate. A variety of *S. scabiei* causes mange in animals. Mite infections on humans are self-limiting (i.e. they go away on their own) as the mite is not able to complete its life cycle on the "wrong" host. The condition is extremely itchy, though, while it lasts. The mites are most active where skin is warm (in bed and where clothing is snug).

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