

## **Performance Standards for Veterinary Technology/Nursing Students**

### **Essential Functions for Veterinary Technology/Nursing**

The field of veterinary technology/nursing is both physically and intellectually challenging. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensure that qualified applicants have the ability to pursue program admission. However, all students must meet the essential skills and technical standards to perform functions required of the veterinary technology/nursing program and profession. Every student will be held to the same standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

Independently is defined as the ability to perform a task without the help of others. Reasonable accommodations such as but not limited to hearing aids and sound enhancing stethoscopes are allowed.

### **General Physical Requirements**

With or without accommodations, given the necessary/appropriate “tools/equipment/etc.” students must independently:

- Walk and stand for at least ten minutes at a time, multiple times per hour.
- Lift and/or carry up to 50 pounds from floor to waist level or higher at least several times per day.
- Lift objects weighing up to 50 pounds to a height of one meter or higher and carry the object or animal for a distance of two meters.
- Handle, install, position and move materials, equipment, and supplies.
- Handle, position, and restrain live animals of small and large animal species.
- Have sustained contact with multiple species of animals and learn 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.

### **Cognitive Ability**

Students must:

- Function in a structured environment within significant time constraints, make rapid decisions in urgent situations, and meet deadlines.
- Demonstrate a willingness to assist with and perform a wide variety of routine medical, surgical, and diagnostic procedures common to the veterinary setting; including humane euthanasia and handling of sick, injured, fractious, or aggressive animals without fear.
- Complete required tasks/functions under stressful and/or unpredictable conditions, including emergency situations.
- Access information from books, reference manuals, computers, and paper and electronic medical documents to perform duties and safely use equipment.
- Prioritize, organize, and utilize time-management skills to perform tasks.
- Evaluate, synthesize and communicate diagnostic information to the attending veterinarian and/or staff.
- Demonstrate the need for minimal supervision as they advance through the program.

### **Communication Skills (Appropriate communication is defined in the Veterinary Nursing Handbook)**

With or without accommodations, given the necessary/appropriate “tools/equipment/etc.” students must independently:

- Communicate accurately and effectively in English.
- Comprehend and carry out complex written and oral instructions given in English.
- Make legible and coherent notes in English within the margins and space provided on the appropriate forms.

### **Professionalism and Interpersonal Skills (Professionalism and interpersonal skills are defined in the Veterinary Nursing Handbook)**

Students must:

- Demonstrate professional and socially appropriate behavior; maintain cleanliness and personal grooming consistent with close human and animal contact.
- Interact appropriately with clients and all members of the veterinary healthcare team.
- Demonstrate good judgment and make appropriate professional and procedural judgment decisions under stressful and/or emergency conditions (i.e., unstable patient condition), emergent demands (i.e., stat test orders), and distracting environments (i.e., high noise levels, complex visual stimuli, aggressive animals).

### **Manual Dexterity and Mobility**

With or without accommodations, given the necessary/appropriate “tools/equipment/etc. “students must independently:

- 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.
- Perform the essential functions of the profession. This includes manipulating small equipment, adjusting resistance on equipment, holding hooves while cleaning and evaluating, managing syringes, catheters, and common surgical instruments.
- Complete physical assessment and perform nursing duties in a timely manner. This includes performing palpation during physical exams, administering oral, intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intravenous medication, inserting and removing tubes, collecting organic samples from live animals, and performing wound care.
- Palpate and interpret findings (i.e., palpation of pulses, lymph nodes or trachea) to determine proper endotracheal tube size.
- Operate surgical instruments. This includes assisting with hemostats or other instruments while assisting in surgery; inducing and monitoring general anesthesia in an animal patient; placing intravenous and urinary catheters.
- Hold, manipulate, or tie materials ranging from a cloth patch to a very fine string. This includes using a surgical sponge; tying a 00-silk suture; endotracheal intubation; intravenous injection; catheterizing animals to obtain sample of urine and/or other body fluids; applying bandages.

### **Auditory, Olfactory, and Visual Skills**

Veterinary technicians must safely and correctly assess patients and interpret and record data.

With or without accommodations, given the necessary/appropriate “tools/equipment/etc. “students must independently:

- Determine minute areas of detail, very small variations in color and adequate depth perception (size, shape and texture), including differentiation of details as viewed through a microscope. This includes characterizing and interpreting the color, odor, clarity, and viscosity of body structures and fluids, observing variations in skin and mucus membrane color, integrity, pulsations, tissue swelling, etc.
- Observe and assess as necessary in nursing care both from a distance and close by in order to recognize physical status and non-verbal responses including behaviors.

- Monitor and assess health status, including auscultation of heart and lungs, and respond to equipment alarms and warning sounds from animals, humans, and/or equipment of impending danger or injury.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to distress sounds from animal and alarms/warning signals on animal-monitoring equipment directly and through intercommunication systems to ensure patient safety.
- Detect and respond appropriately to odors in order to maintain environmental safety and patient needs.
- Use a compound microscope to identify cells and organisms and be able to differentiate colors of stained objects.
- 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 detecting and describing a change in color of hair coat caused by licking or trauma; detecting abnormal head posture in a parakeet; monitoring respiratory rate during anesthesia; reading 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 characterizing bacterial hemolysis on a blood agar plate; density patterns on a radiograph; and trace ECG.
- Demonstrate 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; determining presence of reaction to skin testing for allergies.
- Communicate in a surgery room while all occupants wear surgical masks.
- Detect movement of large animals in a pen or corral.
- Monitor multiple patients in an ICU.

### **Request for Accommodations**

Students seeking accommodations must self-disclose to the Student Access for Improved Learning (SAIL) office to determine eligibility.

Accommodations specific to core program requirements will be at least equivalent to those approved by the licensing body.

To ascertain appropriate accommodations, SAIL may request assistance from appropriate veterinary medicine and technical specialists: **SAIL website:**  
<https://www.easternflorida.edu/academics/academic-support/sail/>.

## **Performance Standards Acknowledgement Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand this agreement.  
(student's printed name)

By signing below, I verify that I meet the minimum standards outlined herein. I understand that if I cannot perform the AVMA mandated essential tasks in any course, I will not pass the course or be able to continue in the veterinary technology/nursing program at EFSC.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(student's signature) (dated)

Address:

Phone:

Email address: