

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY - COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
PRECEPTORSHIP GUIDELINES & POLICIES**

Program Description: The preceptorship program of the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine consists of 8 weeks, with training in a viable clinical practice situation under the direct supervision of a practicing veterinarian. The major objectives of the program are to acquaint the student with the scope and pace of clinical practice and to teach the student aspects of management, finances, client relations, personnel supervision, and housekeeping as can best be found in a practice situation.

Qualifications for Practice Inclusion:

A. **Preceptor:** The preceptor (practitioner) must have been in possession of their veterinary degree for at least five years and must be a member in good standing of his/her state veterinary medical association and of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

B. **Preceptorship Application:** Currently unapproved/expired preceptorship sites must complete a preceptorship application to have the opportunity to host our preceptorship students. After the application deadline, our Preceptorship Committee will review the applications to determine whether sites can be a preceptorship host. Important considerations in the approval process are a) evidence of good surgical standards, b) compliance with all state and federal radiological standards, c) adequacy of case load, d) availability of diagnostic services, and e) willingness of the preceptor to provide supervised, hands-on experience.

Practices providing small animal services must adhere to high standards of surgical service including a separate prep room; appropriate anesthesia and analgesia; and use of gowns, caps, and masks, and appropriate surgical techniques. Standards for large animal surgery must be consistent with good modern surgical technique and provide for the performance of aseptic operative procedures.

The practice must be equipped to provide a full radiographic service without hazardous exposure. Film badges or dosimeters must be used. Large animal portable equipment is not acceptable for small animal radiography which exceeds nine centimeters (3 ½ inches) in depth. Approval by appropriate state agencies is required.

Responsibilities: One veterinarian per practice will be the preceptor of record. The preceptor is responsible for the direct supervision of the student. The preceptor will ensure that the degree of responsibility outlined by the preceptorship program shall, in no way, conflict with the practice act of their state or with the acts of those states where work might be done. The Preceptorship Committee is aware of some practices where excellent work is done but where previous students have reported that they were allowed only to observe, or hold animals, receiving little, if any, hands-on experience. The Committee respects the quality of these practices but feels that they do not fulfill the objectives of the preceptorship program. Approval as a preceptorship practice may not be extended in such situations.

Practice Setting: To gain a broader appreciation of veterinary medicine, students should not select preceptorships with relatives or practices where they have previously worked for prolonged periods of time. Also, except for large cities, it is recommended that students not do a preceptorship in their hometown, especially if they are planning to open a practice in that vicinity (this has previously resulted in unhappy relationships.) Additionally, if a student will be at a specialty practice for preceptorship, they can only work in the emergency department while there.

Unless a waiver is granted by the Preceptorship Committee, the following are not permitted:

- a. Preceptorship within a 30-mile radius of Auburn
- b. More than one veterinary student at a particular practice.

These stipulations have been made to hopefully ensure that the student's preceptorship experience is the best it can be.

Visitation Practice Policy: The Preceptorship Committee feels that an important aspect of the preceptorship program is personal visitation and assessment of practices under consideration. Students are strongly encouraged to visit a practice prior to selecting it as a preceptorship site.

Preceptor/Student Contracts: The student shall not make a firm commitment (or sign any contracts) for a preceptorship before checking with the Office of Academic Affairs to confirm the practice has a current approved practice assessment on file. Premature commitments to practices that were not approved have been embarrassing to all parties. When this occurs, that particular preceptorship will be denied for the student involved. As stated earlier, the purpose of the preceptorship program is to provide practice experience prior to graduation; therefore, it should not be considered a job placement service. It is not in the best interest of either party to enter into a long-range agreement or understanding prior to the beginning of the preceptorship. The College of Veterinary Medicine recommends that discussions about employment after graduation be delayed until the last third of the preceptorship period.

Case Log / Evaluations: A log of daily activities must be maintained by the student. The logs, preceptorship application, practice description, and student evaluation on the experience will become available for review by future students. The evaluation of the student by the preceptor is confidential to the Preceptorship Committee and other faculty members of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Ethical Behavior: The student is still enrolled and is, therefore, subject to the Student Code of Ethical Relations. Any breach of ethical behavior during the preceptorship will be handled by the College of Veterinary Medicine. **The student is not to be considered a substitute veterinarian and should not be represented as a DVM. Thus, it is inappropriate for the title "doctor" to be used until after graduation.**

Site Visit: Practices participating in the preceptorship program may be subject to an unscheduled on-site visit by a member of the Preceptorship Committee during the preceptorship period.

Deadlines: Forms for all new preceptorship opportunities must be completed by their deadline to have the opportunity to host the class that is about to graduate. After this deadline passes, the application will only be considered for the next graduating class. After that date, only a previously approved preceptorship will be allowed. Students whose sites do not apply by the deadline or whose sites do not get approved by the Preceptorship Committee will have to pick from the list of currently approved preceptorship sites. Additionally, if a change happens where a student can no longer go to their planned site for preceptorship, the student will have to pick from currently approved preceptorship sites. Students who do not have contractual agreements on file in the Office of Academic Affairs by their deadline may be required to do their preceptorship during the summer semester and graduate in August.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE PRECEPTOR / STUDENT CONTRACT

THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING DELINEATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND COST OF LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

VETERINARIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES ARE:

1. To assume the responsibilities of a faculty member during the 8 week preceptorship period.
2. To ensure that the responsibilities delegated to the student shall in no way conflict with the veterinary practice act of his/her state or those where work might be done.
3. To conduct oneself in a professional and ethical manner.
4. To extend the same privileges to the student as afforded other practice employees.
5. To not consider the student as a substitute employee or to represent the student as being a graduate veterinarian.
6. To provide a written job description as a part of the student/practitioner contract so that the student will have an understanding of his/her responsibilities.
7. To ensure that the student's assignments, as much as possible, cover all aspects of the practice including office management, bookkeeping, and economics.
8. To evaluate the student's performance by completing and returning, by the required deadlines, the forms necessary for course evaluation and graduation to the Office of Academic Affairs College of Veterinary Medicine.
9. To allow site visits by a representative of Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine.
10. To participate in the preceptorship for the entire 8 week period, following the suggested work schedule set forth in the AVMA guidelines (40-60 hours/week).
11. To alert the student and College of Veterinary Medicine of conflicts or situations where successful completion may be compromised.

STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES ARE:

1. To regard the host veterinary practitioner as a faculty member.
2. To conduct oneself in an ethical and professional manner.
3. To be responsible for keeping all professional matters confidential in the true doctor/client relationship.
4. To maintain a personal appearance and attitude befitting a professional - neat, clean, congenial, and loyal.
5. To be responsible for having appropriate professional attire and footwear unless other arrangements are made with the host practitioner.
6. To complete evaluation questionnaires at the end of the training period and return them to the Office of Academic Affairs of the College of Veterinary Medicine by required deadline.
7. To maintain a daily log of his/her practice experience and activities to be submitted for review by the Preceptorship Committee as partial completion of graduation requirements.
8. To participate in the preceptorship for the entire 8 week period, following the suggested work schedule set forth in the AVMA guidelines (40-60 hours/week).
9. To alert the College of Veterinary Medicine of conflicts or situations where successful completion may be compromised.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE'S RESPONSIBILITIES ARE:

1. To oversee the preceptorship program, so that students obtain an 8 week, hands-on, directly supervised experience.
2. To guide the students in the selection of their preceptorship opportunities.
3. To ensure that students are academically eligible to complete the preceptorship.
4. To evaluate the preceptorship experience (using student logs, preceptor and student evaluations) to ensure satisfactory completion of requirements for graduation.
5. To help mediate conflicts between the participating veterinarian and student.