AUBURN UNIVERSITY - COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
PRECEPTORSHIP GUIDELINES & POLICIES

Program Description: Beginning with the class of 2028, the preceptorship program of the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine consists of 6 weeks of training in a viable clinical practice setting 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

Preceptor: The preceptor (practitioner) must have been in possession of their veterinary degree for at least five years and must have an active license to practice in the state in which they are employed.

Preceptorship Application: Currently unapproved/expired preceptorship sites must complete a preceptorship application to be eligible to host our preceptorship students. During the fall semester, our Preceptorship Committee will review applications to determine whether sites can serve as preceptorship hosts. 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 meet high surgical standards. This includes the use of a separate prep room, appropriate anesthesia and analgesia, proper surgical attire (gowns, caps, and masks), and adherence to proper surgical techniques. For large animal surgery, standards should align with modern surgical practices and ensure aseptic procedures are performed consistently.

The practice must be equipped to provide a full radiographic service without hazardous exposure. Film badges or dosimeters must be used. 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 in which excellent work is done, but in which previous students have reported being allowed only to observe or handle animals, receiving little, if any, hands-on experience. The Committee respects the quality of these practices but believes they do not meet the objectives of the preceptorship program. Approval as a preceptorship practice may not be extended in such situations.

Practice Setting: Students may not complete a preceptorship in the practice of a relative. Unless a waiver is granted by the Preceptorship Committee, students may not complete a preceptorship within a 30-mile radius of the college. The preceptorship should be conducted in a general practice setting. Species-limited practices (e.g., all feline) are allowed if the practice meets all approval criteria.

If there is only one veterinary student in a practice, a ratio of at least 1 doctor to 1 student is sufficient. However, if multiple veterinary students, regardless of institution, are in a practice, there should be a ratio of at least 2 doctors for every 1 student. For example, if there are 4 doctors, 2 students may attend the practice (since the ratio is 2:1). Three students would not be permitted in a 2-doctor practice (since the ratio falls below 2:1).

The preceptorship cannot be split between multiple practices unless the preceptor of record splits their time between practices as part of their job, and if both sites are currently approved preceptorship sites.

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. Additionally, all approved practices will need to provide an application verification/update to ensure that preceptorship requirements are met at the time of student matriculation. Premature commitments to unapproved practices have been embarrassing to all parties. The preceptorship 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 daily activity log must be maintained by the student. The logs, preceptorship application, and practice description will be available for future students to review. 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. The College of Veterinary Medicine will handle any breach of ethical behavior during the preceptorship. **The student is not to be considered a substitute veterinarian and should not be represented as a DVM. Thus, it is inappropriate to use the title "doctor" before 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 be eligible to host the class 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 occurs and a student can no longer attend their planned preceptorship site, they must choose 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.

Students must be academically eligible to complete a preceptorship.

Dates for all delayed preceptorships must be approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in consultation with the requesting student's Preceptorship Committee faculty mentor.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE PRECEPTOR / STUDENT CONTRACT

THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING DELINEATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

VETERINARIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES ARE:

1. To assume the responsibilities of a faculty member during the 6-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 professionally and ethically.
4. To extend the same privileges to the student as afforded to 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 discuss expectations with the student to outline responsibilities and expectations.
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 at the College of Veterinary Medicine.
9. To ensure that if multiple veterinary students, regardless of institution, are present, the ratio of doctors to students is no less than 2:1.
10. To allow site visits by a representative of Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine.
11. To participate in the preceptorship for the entire 6-week period, following the suggested work schedule outlined in the AVMA guidelines (40-60 hours/week).
12. To alert the student and the 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 ethically and professionally.
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 the 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 6-week period, following the suggested work schedule outlined 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 6-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.