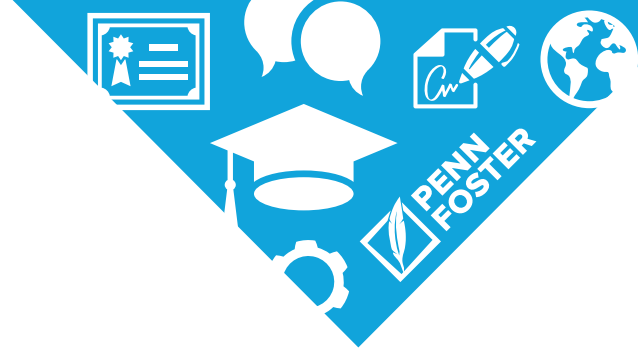


# Veterinary Assistant

## PROGRAM OUTLINE



### PROGRAM GOAL AND OUTCOMES

#### Program Goal

To prepare students to work as veterinary assistants under the supervision of veterinarians and veterinary technicians in small or large animal hospitals or clinics and to prepare students to take the national test to become an Approved Veterinary Assistant.

Program Outcomes	Courses	Evidence of Learning
<b>All the following program outcomes were taken from the NAVTA's Essential Skills for Assistant Training</b>		
<b>I. Office and Hospital Procedures</b>		
A. Front desk: Greet clients, demonstrate proper appointment scheduling and make appointments, prepare appropriate certificates for signature, admit patient, perform basic filing and retrieving of medical records, perform basic veterinary medical record-keeping procedures, demonstrate elementary computer skills, utilize basic medical terminology, and perform basic invoicing, billing, and payment on account procedures.	VAS009 Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 1–9
B. Telephone: Answer and direct phone calls, recognize and respond appropriately to veterinary medical emergencies by notifying the appropriate hospital personnel, and request records and information from other veterinary facilities.	VAS006 Emergency and Wound Care	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS009 Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 10–12
C. Maintain basic cleanliness and orderliness of a veterinary facility: Inventory supplies, restock shelves, maintain x-ray, surgery, and laboratory logs, perform basic filing and retrieving of medical records, radiographs, lab reports, etc., and demonstrate knowledge of basic cleaning techniques of animal kennels and bedding, examination rooms, hospital facilities, and surgical suites.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS008 Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS009 Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 13, 16, 29, 14, 82

<b>II. Communication and Client Relations</b>		
A. Develop effective client communication skills.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS009 Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 1–109
B. Write business letters and use professional electronic communication with clients.	VAS009 Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skill 18
C. Understand ethical conduct in relation to the day-to-day operations of a vet hospital.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skill 9
D. Describe the roles and responsibilities of each member of the veterinary health team and the important part that each plays in the delivery of excellent care.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 20, 65, 81
E. Professional conduct: Understand the human-animal bond, demonstrate professional and appropriate appearance and language in the workplace, and demonstrate appropriate use of electronic communication in the workplace (cell phone usage, text messaging, social networking, digital photography, etc.).	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 21, 22, 23, 72
<b>III. Pharmacy and Pharmacology</b>		
A. Legal issues: Recognize legal issues involving drugs in the workplace, recognize general types and groups of drugs and demonstrate proper terminology, differentiate prescription drugs from over-the-counter drugs, and describe proper prescription label requirements.	VAS007 Small and Large Animal Nursing	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 24–27
B. Filling medications and inventory control: Label and package dispensed drugs correctly, store, safely handle, and dispose of biological and therapeutic agents, pesticides, and hazardous waste, and perform inventory control procedures including restocking supplies and checking expiration dates.	VAS007 Small and Large Animal Nursing	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 13, 26–27, 28, 29, 58, 89
C. Vaccinations: Reconstitute vaccines and be familiar with proper protocols, describe possible routes and methods of drug and vaccine administration that the veterinarian or veterinary technician may choose, and demonstrate appropriate small animal restraint for such protocols.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS006 Emergency and Wound Care	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 2, 30, 31

<b>IV. Examination Room Procedures</b>		
A. Restrain patients: Small animals, birds, rabbits, pocket pets, exotics, and large animals.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 32–38, 39, 40–44
B. Basic procedures: Determine and record temperature, pulse, respiration, body condition score, and weight of patients, trim nails (required: cats and dogs; optional: birds and exotics), express anal sacs using the external method, identify external parasites (mites, lice, fleas, and ticks), recognize AKC dog breeds and CFA cat breeds, be able to properly identify the gender of small animal species, particularly felines, perform exam room grooming (i.e., trimming nails, external ear canal cleaning, etc.), and be familiar with small animal nutritional requirements, pet food labeling standards, dry matter basis calculations, and the differences between pet food products.	VAS005 Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS007 Small and Large Animal Nursing	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 46–53
<b>V. Small Animal Nursing (Large Animal Nursing—Optional)</b>		
A. Safety concerns: Demonstrate knowledge of basic normal and abnormal animal behavior, utilize patient and personnel safety measures, identify potential zoonotic diseases, describe isolation procedures, describe hazardous waste disposal, describe basic sanitation, and be familiar with OSHA standards.	VAS002 Behavior, Handling, and Restraint	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 54–60
B. Animal care: Provide routine record-keeping and observation of hospitalized patients, i.e. stress importance of notations made when cleaning and feeding, demonstrate a basic understanding of common diseases and medical conditions, monitor/restrain patients for fluid therapy and record observations, perform hand pilling (dog, cat), demonstrate understanding of treatment plan, apply and remove bandages to/from healthy animals (equine leg and tail wraps are optional), perform therapeutic bathing, basic grooming, and dipping of small animals, clean external ear canals, prepare food and prescription diets—be aware of any special dietary needs, clean and disinfect cages and kennels (stalls are optional), provide care and maintenance of nursing equipment, and demonstrate an understanding of euthanasia and post mortem care.	VAS006 Emergency and Wound Care	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS007 Small and Large Animal Nursing	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 61–72

<b>VI. Surgical Preparation and Assisting</b>		
A. Assist in performing surgical preparations: Prepare surgical equipment/supplies, sterilize instruments and supplies using appropriate methods, identify common instruments, identify common suture materials, types, and sizes, assist the veterinarian and/or veterinary technician with preparation of patients using aseptic technique, operate and maintain autoclaves, describe operating room sanitation and care, assist with positioning of surgical patients, aid the veterinarian/ and or veterinary technician with physical monitoring of recovering surgical patients, and maintain the surgical log.	VAS008 Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 73–82
B. Facility and equipment cleanliness: Maintain proper operating room conduct and asepsis, perform post-surgical cleanup, and fold surgical gowns and drapes.	VAS008 Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 83–85
C. Have knowledge of: Surgical equipment, surgical room and prep area, instrument cleaning and care, and proper disposal of hazardous medical wastes.	VAS008 Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 86–89
<b>VII. Laboratory Procedures</b>		
A. Assistance in the laboratory: Collect voided urine samples, determine physical properties of urine including color and clarity, assist in the collection of blood samples for procedures, collect voided fecal samples for examination, prepare fecal flotation solutions and set up fecal flotations and direct smears, assist the DVM or veterinary technician in necropsy procedures, explain how to handle rabies suspects and samples safely, and handle disposal of deceased animals.	VAS007 Small and Large Animal Nursing	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 90–97
B. Laboratory record keeping: Ensure all laboratory results are accurately recorded, stock laboratory supplies, file laboratory reports.	VAS009 Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 98–100
<b>VIII. Radiology and Ultrasound Imaging</b>		
Follow recommended safety measures, assist the veterinarian and/or the veterinary technician in the completion of diagnostic radiographs and ultrasound including the restraint and positioning of patients, process diagnostic radiographs, use hand or automatic processing in darkroom, maintain quality control, label, file, and store film and radiographs, properly care for equipment, clean screens, and know safety techniques for handling processing chemicals.	VAS008 Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination	Multiple-choice lesson exams
	VAS010 Veterinary Assistant Externship	Skills 101–109

# PROGRAM STRUCTURE

## Course 1: Starting Your Program

Lesson 1 Starting Your Program

## Course 2: Behavior, Handling, and Restraint

Lesson 2 Introduction to Animal Care

Lesson 3 Behavior

Lesson 4 Handling and Restraint

## Course 3: Body Systems and Terminology, Part 1

Lesson 5 Introduction to Veterinary Terminology

Lesson 6 Skeletal and Muscular Systems

Lesson 7 Integumentary, Circulatory, and Respiratory Systems

## Course 4: Body Systems and Terminology, Part 2

Lesson 8 Digestive, Reproductive, and Urinary Systems

Lesson 9 Nervous System, Sensory Organs, and Endocrine System

## Course 5: Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination

Lesson 10 Nutrition

Lesson 11 Reproduction and Aging

Lesson 12 Avian and Reptile Anatomy

Lesson 13 History and Physical Examination

## Course 6: Emergency and Wound Care

Lesson 14 Immunology

Lesson 15 Emergency Care

Lesson 16 Wound Care and Management

## Course 7: Small and Large Animal Nursing

Lesson 17 Clinical Parasitology

Lesson 18 Small and Large Animal Nursing, Part 1

Lesson 19 Small and Large Animal Nursing, Part 2

Lesson 20 Veterinary Pharmacology

## Course 8: Radiology and Surgical Preparation

Lesson 21 Radiology

Lesson 22 Instrumentation and Principles of Aseptic Technique

Lesson 23 Surgical and Anesthetic Preparation

## **Course 9: Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures**

Lesson 24	<b>Veterinary Practice and Administration</b>
Lesson 25	<b>Interpersonal Communication</b>
Lesson 26	<b>General Accounting Practices</b>
Lesson 27	<b>Veterinary Practice Procedures</b>

## **Course 10: Veterinary Assistant Externship**

Lesson 28	<b>Graded Project: Profile</b>
Lesson 29	<b>Graded Project: Written Communication Skills</b>
Lesson 30	<b>Clinical Externship</b>

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

## SYP101: Starting Your Program

In this course, you'll develop the necessary skills to ensure your success in the program. You'll learn how you can improve your study skills so you're able to use a number of tools that will help you to be successful.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Identify skills needed to be a confident and independent online learner

## VAS002: Behavior, Handling, and Restraint

In this course, you'll get an overview of what's needed to work as a veterinary assistant in a variety of settings. Veterinary assistants work closely with animals alongside other veterinary professionals. This course will introduce you to the skills needed to be a valuable member of the veterinary team in any of the many different areas of the profession. Veterinary healthcare is an exciting, constantly changing field.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Describe qualities, requirements, functions, and professionalism of veterinary practice
- Identify scientific approaches and characteristics of animal behavior
- Navigate large and small animal handling and restraint

## VAS003: Body Systems and Terminology, Part 1

This course provides an introduction to veterinary terminology. You'll learn to recognize, understand, and pronounce anatomical and veterinary procedure terminology. You'll also learn about metric terms and abbreviations. You'll study the anatomical terms to correctly indicate the orientation and location of animal body parts, and you'll recognize cells, tissues, organs, and organ systems, both structurally and functionally. You'll also study the four major classes of joints and explain how they function. Finally, you'll describe the structure and function of skin and the animal's fur, identify the glands and their secretions, explain the structural and functional differences between the organs of the upper and lower respiratory system, and understand how the lungs and the parts of the respiratory system work together to supply oxygen to the body's cells.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Define veterinary terminology, language, and procedures
- Recognize the structure and function of the skeletal and muscular systems
- Recognize the structure and function of the integumentary, circulatory, and respiratory systems

## VAS004: Body Systems and Terminology, Part 2

In this course, you'll identify the organs of the digestive system and explain the structure and function of each part, compare the structure of the stomach and large intestine of carnivores and herbivores, recognize the organs of male and female reproductive systems and the events that occur during fertilization, and explain the anatomy and functions of the urinary system. You'll also study the organization of the nervous system and how the nervous system receives and interprets information; the four senses and their primary functions, which are to provide animals with an awareness of their environment and assist them in their survival; and the function of the endocrine system and the major glands and hormones that maintain body homeostasis.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- List the organs and their functions for the digestive, reproductive, and urinary systems
- Identify the nervous system, sensory organs, and endocrine system

## **VAS005: Nutrition, History, and Physical Examination**

In this course, you'll learn about proper nutrition for animals and the veterinary assistant's role in nutritional care. You'll also study the reproductive systems of the male and female animals. You'll study how to care for aging animals. You'll learn about the unique anatomies of birds and reptiles. Finally, you'll learn to take a good medical history, perform a thorough physical examination, and assist the veterinarian with the animal patient in ways that are humane, safe, and effective.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Explain the veterinary assistant's role in nutritional care and the six nutrients essential for life
- List the functions of the various parts of the male and female reproductive systems
- Identify the body systems common to all birds and reptiles
- Describe the veterinary assistant's role in routine veterinary examinations

## **VAS006: Emergency and Wound Care**

In this course, you'll learn about what vaccines exist, how vaccines work, and when a vaccination is necessary. You'll also study how to handle calls from pet owners, how to advise owners on how to transport injured animals, and how to provide appropriate first aid in transport. You'll learn to recognize the signs of common emergency problems and participate in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation. In addition, you'll learn to recognize the different types of wounds, explain how a wound heals and the factors that affect wound healing, care for wounds, and identify the proper way to maintain, change, and remove bandages, splints, casts, and slings.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Describe the functions of the immune system and how vaccines work
- Discuss how to handle emergency situations and manage grief
- Explain proper wound care

## **VAS007: Small and Large Animal Nursing**

In this course, you'll learn about parasites and parasitology, the different types of animal parasites, and how to diagnose, treat, and prevent parasites. You'll also learn how to monitor and observe an animal's habits and behaviors. You'll study common procedures used in veterinary sample collection and diagnosis, treatment procedures involved in veterinary nursing, and physical therapy concerns and methods relevant to your duties as a veterinary assistant. You'll also study the principles and procedures of dog and cat dental prophylaxis, as well as the concerns and procedures of pediatric, geriatric, and routine animal health care. Finally, you'll study veterinary drugs, where they come from, and who regulates them. You'll learn how drugs enter the body and how to ensure that the right amount enters and identify drugs used for infection, inflammation, vital organs, body systems, disease prevention, and hormone regulation.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Explain common types of parasites and their detection
- Describe your role in the care of hospitalized animals
- Discuss routine animal care and common treatment procedures
- Explain veterinary pharmacology and types of drugs used to treat various systems

## **VAS008: Radiology and Surgical Preparation**

In this course, you'll study the principles of radiology and the veterinary assistant's role in radiology. You'll learn how to prepare patients for radiographic and ultrasound examination and the safety measures and guidelines for radiographic procedures. You'll learn how to label, file, and store radiographs. You'll also learn to recognize various surgical instruments and how to clean, sterilize (eliminate all bacteria, fungi, and viruses), and maintain the instruments. Finally, you'll learn the general process of admitting a patient to a hospital and the importance of a good relationship with the



animal's owner, as well as study some commonly performed surgical procedures and how to prepare an animal for surgery. You'll learn to recognize anesthetic drugs, how they're used, the anesthetic process, and how an animal is monitored and maintained under anesthesia.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Discuss radiology and radiation safety
- Describe surgical instruments, sterilization, and aseptic techniques
- Outline commonly performed surgeries and your role in surgical preparation and surgery

### **VAS009: Veterinary Practice Administration and Procedures**

In this course, you'll learn how to order and maintain office inventory and supplies as well as how to admit and discharge patients and prepare appropriate release forms and certificates. You'll study the role of the veterinary assistant within a typical veterinary practice, including how successful interpersonal communication skills can help you deal with clients and coworkers. You'll also study some of the basic accounting principles you'll need to keep accurate records of office financial transactions. You'll prepare billing statements and collection letters, write checks, complete deposit slips, and reconcile bank statements.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Explain the policies, procedures, and day-to-day operations of a standard veterinary practice
- Describe the communication process and how it functions within a veterinary practice
- Identify how to use accounting systems to manage the payroll and expenses of a veterinary practice
- Demonstrate comprehension of the skills required of a veterinary assistant

### **VAS010: Veterinary Assistant Externship**

This course introduces the student to the Veterinary Assistant externship. The goal of this clinical externship is to provide you with the hands-on experience necessary to develop the skills you'll need to work as a veterinary assistant. You'll practice under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian or credentialed veterinary technician. This externship consists of 100 hours of clinical experience in a full-service companion animal practice to be completed in 8 to 16 weeks.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate program skills as defined on the Veterinary Assistant Evaluation form

**Note:** The titles of your learning materials may be different from those listed on your program outline. There is no need to call your instructor about these differences. While the titles of certain learning materials may differ, the educational content is the same. All learning materials are designed to give you the finest education in your field. If you need instructional assistance, however, be sure to call for help. We reserve the right to revise the program of study and the instructional materials and to substitute for the items of equipment offered.