

Veterinary Assistant

The program goal is to **educate and prepare** multi-skilled paraprofessionals in the field of veterinary medicine. Students will earn a certificate for each course they complete in the program.

Program/Course Description

The Veterinary Assistant program consists of eight semester length courses and a practicum for a total of 736 contact hours. It is heavily technique oriented from the outset utilizing a tiered approach, thus encouraging students to enter employment at various levels of competency while continuing their education. Participants will practice learned skills immediately and often. Training will focus on skills required of a back-office and front-office assistant with lab and practicum experiences in a variety of clinical settings.

Performance Objectives

The successful completion of the *Veterinary Assistant Program* enables the graduate to:

- Perform basic patient evaluations;
- Restrain & manage dogs and cats in clinical situations;
- Recognize behavioral signs in dogs and cats;
- Counsel clients especially in the area of pet nutrition.
- Admit and discharge patients;
- Communicate with clients & assist in telephone triage of patients;
- Administer treatments, medications, or biologicals as ordered by a DVM;
- Prepare & assist during surgical procedures;
- Monitor patients during and following anesthesia;
- Assist during dental cleaning procedures;
- Produce standard diagnostic radiographs;
- Collect samples and perform common veterinary diagnostic tests;
- Provide emergency first aid to dogs and cats;
- Perform auxiliary animal health care tasks consistent with standards of good veterinary medical practice.

Veterinary Assistant Certificate

Course Number	Course Name	Contact Hours
CORE		
VTHT 1005	Veterinary Medical Terminology	32
VTHT 1001	Introduction to Veterinary Technology	96
VTHT 1009	Veterinary Nutrition	48
VTHT 1013	Veterinary Anatomy & Physiology	96
VTHT 2001	Canine & Feline Clinical Management	80
VTHT 1049	Veterinary Pharmacology	48
VTHT 2023	Clinical Pathology I	64
VTHT 1041	Anesthesia & Surgical Assistance	80
VTHT 1066	Practicum-Veterinary Assistant	192
	Total Contact Hours	736
ELECTIVE		
VTHT 1025	Pharmacology Calculations*	24

(*Not a required course but highly recommended for students with marginal math skills)

Admission Requirements

High school diploma or GED
Good communication skills;
Ability to work with both animals and people;
Strong interest in veterinary science;
Able to lift, walk and carry animals up to forty pounds
Good hand-eye coordination

Clinical Affiliations

Austin Humane Society (AHS)
Austin/Travis County Animal Services (TLAC)
Animal Trustees of Austin (ATA)
Multiple Local Veterinary Clinics

Veterinary Assistant General Course Information

Immunizations

It is recommended that students taking courses that will expose them to live animals in a clinical facility or on a field trip receive tetanus immunization prior to the start of the course. Rabies vaccine is optional but also recommended for all veterinary health care workers: rabies is a fatal viral infection that is endemic in Texas and transmissible to humans from infected animals. However, the rabies vaccine series is expensive and availability is variable.

Supplies-Students will be provided with all supplies required for clinical work.

Veterinary Assistant Program Recommended Schedule

Courses have been designed to fit into the schedule of working students, with most being offered evenings or weekends. The following schedule is suggested for students who wish to complete the program in three semesters; however, this is not required. Students may take courses at their own pace, as long as prerequisites are completed before registering for intermediate and advanced level classes. Please be aware that courses without the required minimum number of registered student will most likely be canceled. This would result in an unexpected delay in program completion.

Track One	FALL (1st semester)	SPRING (2nd semester)	SUMMER (3rd semester)
	VTHT 1001	VTHT 1009	VTHT 1041
	VTHT 1005	VTHT 1049	VTHT 2001
	VTHT 1013	VTHT 2023	VTHT 1066
Track Two	SPRING (1st semester)	SUMMER (2nd semester)	FALL (3rd semester)
	VTHT 1001	VTHT 1009	VTHT 1041
	VTHT 1005	VTHT 1049	VTHT 2001
	VTHT 1013	VTHT 2023	VTHT 1066

Veterinary Assistant Course Descriptions

VTHT 1001 Introduction to Veterinary Technology Course Level: Introductory

Prior to registration for this course, students must attend a mandatory orientation, which will be offered before the start of the course. Please contact 223.7090 for orientation dates. Students must bring a copy of their high school diploma or GED equivalency to orientation, the student will also be required to lift and move an object weighing 40+ pounds from the floor to a table and demonstrate hand-eye coordination.

Course Description: Survey of the profession of veterinary technology with emphasis on basic techniques, handling and care of domestic animals, and ethical and professional requirements.

Learning Outcomes: The student will demonstrate basic restraint, medication, and treatment techniques for domestic animals; identify breeds of domestic animals; and specify the distinct job responsibilities of a veterinary technician in a modern veterinary practice including physical exams, basic care, feeding, sanitation, public and/or client relations, and ethical and legal issues. Must attend training at Humane Society of Austin; 124 W. Anderson Lane on first day of assigned lab.

VTHT 1005 Veterinary Terminology Course Level: Introductory

Course Description: Introduction to word structure, meaning of word parts, and analysis of common veterinary terms.
Learning Outcomes: The student will define, apply, and analyze common veterinary terms

VTHT 1025 Pharmacological Calculations Course Level: Introductory

Course Description: Skill development in calculating oral and parenteral drug dosages using metric and standard units.

VTHT 1013 Anatomy & Physiology Course Level: Introductory

Course Description: Gross anatomy of domestic animals including physiological explanations of how each organ system functions.

Learning Outcomes: The student will identify and describe the major anatomical and physiological systems of domestic animals and apply this knowledge to common disease processes. 48 hour didactic component on-line, Lab with cat dissection at ACC. Computer and internet access required. Access to computer lab provided on campuses other than Highland Business Center. Prerequisite: VTHT 1005 or may be taken concurrently.

VTHT 1009 **Veterinary Nutrition** **Course Level: Intermediate**
Course Description: Fundamentals of energy and non-energy producing nutrients and their sources and functions. Integration of concepts including digestion, absorption, and metabolism with application to normal and therapeutic nutritional needs.
Learning Outcomes: The student will identify energy and non-energy producing nutrients and their sources and functions; describe the role nutrition plays in disease processes; and relate anatomy and physiology of the digestive system to the nutritional needs of domestic animals.
Prerequisite: VTHT 1001, 1005, and 1013, or instructor approval

VTHT 1049 **Veterinary Pharmacology** **Course Level: Intermediate**
Course Description: Fundamentals of pharmacology including recognition, calculation, labeling, packaging, and administration of common veterinary drugs, biologics, and therapeutic agents. Discussion of normal and abnormal responses to these agents.
Learning Outcomes: The student will recognize general types and groups of drugs; prepare, label, package, and dispense pharmaceuticals in an ethical/legal manner; calculate dosages using proper weights, units, and measures; explain and use appropriate routes and methods of drug administration; and differentiate between normal and abnormal responses to medication.
Prerequisite: VTHT 1001, 1005, 1013, or instructor approval

VTHT 2023 **Veterinary Clinical Pathology I** **Course Level: Intermediate**
Course Description: In-depth study of hematology and related chemistries with emphasis on lab procedures.
Learning Outcomes: The student will perform complete blood counts (CBC's); recognize abnormal blood conditions; perform common blood chemistries; demonstrate appropriate use of diagnostic equipment; and perform pre-anesthesia evaluation.
Prerequisite: VTHT 1001, 1005, 1013, or instructor approval

VTHT 2001 **Canine & Feline Clinical Management** **Course Level: Advanced**
Course Description: Survey of feeding, common management practices, and care of canines and felines in a clinical setting. Review of common diseases of canines and felines encountered in the practice of veterinary medicine.
Learning Outcomes: The student will apply appropriate sanitation and disease prevention techniques; utilize appropriate medication procedures; implement knowledge of nutrition, reproduction, and behavior of canines and felines in a clinical setting; and recognize common disease pathophysiology. Lab at Humane Society.
Prerequisite: VTHT 1001, 1005, 1013, 1049, and 2023, or instructor approval

VTHT 1041 **Anesthesia and Surgical Assistance** **Course Level: Advanced**
Course Description: In-depth application of surgical, obstetrical, and anesthesia techniques including identification and use of instruments and equipment.
Learning Outcomes: The student will identify instruments used in veterinary surgery; demonstrate operating room etiquette and the use of sterile technique; perform pre-anesthesia evaluation, administer and monitor anesthesia, and provide post-anesthesia care; recognize and respond appropriately to anesthetic emergencies; and assist with routine surgical and obstetrical procedures.
Prerequisite: VTHT 1001, 1005, 1013, 1049, and 2023, or instructor approval

VTHT 1066 **Practicum (or Field Experience)** **Advanced**
Course Description: An advanced type of work based instruction that helps student gain practical experience for which the student has already acquired the necessary theoretical knowledge and basic skills. Requires program coordinator approval to register.
Prerequisite: Must have completed all course work or may be taken concurrently with VTHT 1041 and VTHT 2001.