

**COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Professional Veterinary Medical Program
Scholastic Standards, Policies, and Procedures**

Academic Probation, Dismissal, and Appeals

Revision November 2007: To Become Effective January 2008

I. Scholastic Standards Committee

The Scholastic Standards Committee of the Professional Veterinary Medical (PVM) Program consists of five faculty members (at least two representing the first two years of the PVM Program and at least two representing the second two years of the PVM Program), and the Associate Dean for the PVM Program (ex officio). Terms for faculty representatives will be for one year renewable. The Dean shall in addition appoint two PVM student representatives to the Committee for the duration of grade appeals or academic dismissal proceedings for PVM students. This committee recommends to the faculty and to the Dean all academic standards, policies and procedures applicable to PVM students matriculating in the College. The committee serves as an appeals body for all PVM student grievances derived from academic decisions made in the PVM Program. The committee also makes recommendations on PVM student appeals for readmission. The College PVM *Scholastic Standards, Policies, and Procedures* document contains material pertinent to academic standards, academic probation, dismissal from the PVM Program, and appeals processes. Scholastic standards, policies, and procedures for undergraduate and graduate students in the College are those of the University as described in the *Academic Program Guide* that contains material pertinent to “Student Rights and Responsibilities” and “Scholastic Standards and Grading.”

Furthermore, the principles and provisions of the Code of Honor of the PVM Students of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences provide guidance for the Scholastic Standards Committee and the administration of the PVM Program.

II. Grades and Scoring for VM courses

- A. Satisfactory (S). A grade of "S" is assigned for satisfactory mastery of all course requirements (learning objectives). The course coordinator and faculty of the course (with approval from the Veterinary Curriculum Committee) will identify the objectives, assignments, examinations or subtopics within a course that must be individually mastered. The general guideline for satisfactory mastery of requirements is a score of 70% or better (considered to be equivalent to a C grade or better). Raw scores may be curved, normalized or otherwise adjusted as necessary to provide a cutoff equivalent to 70%, a low “C” grade.

- B. Unsatisfactory (U). A temporary grade of "U" may be assigned when mastery of course objectives has been achieved in the majority of course requirements, but there was less than satisfactory performance in all requirements of a course. Each course must define these requirements as part of the objectives and grading policy of

the course. All PVM courses will provide the option of receiving a “U” grade. A “U” grade is assigned when the total number of points earned is 65-69.9%, with 70% being the passing grade. In those courses in which a passing grade (equivalent to a C grade or better) is other than 70%, the percentages associated with a “U” grade must be specified in the course syllabus.

- C. Fail (F). A grade of "F" is assigned when a student demonstrates a major performance deficiency as determined by the Course Coordinator and course instructors. A failing grade (F) will be assigned when the total number of points earned is less than 65%. In those courses in which a passing grade (equivalent to a C grade or better) is other than 70%, the percentages associated with an “F” grade must be specified.
- D. Incomplete (I). A grade of "I" is assigned when a student has not yet finished the requirements of a course because of illness or extenuating circumstances. This grade is NOT to be used when a student cannot achieve satisfactory academic standing in the course.
- E. Withdrawal (W). As defined by CSU registrar.
- F. Honors (H). The "H" grade may be assigned for outstanding performance in a course at the option of the course coordinator and faculty of the course, using written criteria presented to the students at the beginning of the course. Refer to the Appendix for a description of “H” grade criteria. Special assignments required for attaining an "H" grade must be completed during the regularly scheduled semester in which the course is given. The grades of "I" and "S" cannot be converted to an "H" grade more than 30 days after the final day of the semester, except by approval from the Scholastic Standards Committee. Faculty in some courses may elect to NOT offer the option of Honors.
- G. Student rank. A non-parametric system of student rank within VM classes is used to quantify student performance and to identify advanced students or marginally performing students. The ranking system will allow for ties, and will advance the ranks immediately following a tie so that there are no average ranks or missing ranks. All students are ranked in each required VM course completed; including those required only of students in a particular track (e.g. “track electives”), and cumulative rank is determined by weighted averaging according to number of credits per course. For required courses in the PVM curriculum, course coordinators may request an exemption from the course ranking system by contacting the Associate Dean for the PVM curriculum. These exemptions are intended only for courses in which assignments are not scored numerically. Rank is not assigned in elective courses. Junior PVM students ranking in the top ten percentile or better and Senior PVM students ranking in the top twenty-five percentile or better may be nominated to Phi Zeta. Special designations at graduation for scholastic performance are determined according to the following University criteria: “Summa Cum Laude” – top one percent of graduates; “Magna Cum Laude” – next three percent of graduates; “Cum Laude” – next six percent of graduates. Students with Honors grades are ranked in descending order based on the total credit hours of "H" grades accumulated in the PVM program, and those in the top 25% of accumulated "H" grades upon the completion of the PVM Program may graduate with "Distinction".

III. Academic Standards for the PVM Program

- A. Students are required to fulfill all published course requirements for completion of work assignments, successful achievement of evaluation criteria, and attendance of scheduled class time. Course coordinators and departments are responsible for establishing class attendance policies. These policies must accommodate student participation in College sanctioned extracurricular or co-curricular activities. Students must inform their instructors prior to the anticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in the same semester of registration in the course. Following this, instructors must make reasonable efforts to enable those students to make up work, which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examinations, laboratories). In the event of a dispute under this policy, individuals may appeal using procedures described under *Appeal Processes for the PVM Program*.
- B. Students may be required to pass a comprehensive final examination if such is offered and/or required by the instructor(s) in a course. A practical examination may be required by the Practicum Coordinator to evaluate the proficiency of the students in the procedures taught during the Junior and Senior Practicum.
- C. Each required or elective VM course in the PVM curriculum must be satisfactorily completed, and each semester in the PVM program is considered a prerequisite to the next.
- D. For the Junior and Senior Practicum, each rotation is an assignment that must be fully attended and mastered. Each faculty member responsible for a Senior Practicum rotation must complete a written critique of performance for each student, and assign a grade. The critique and grade must be submitted to the Senior Practicum Coordinator no later than two weeks after the end of the rotation for which the grade is given. An unexcused absence or unsatisfactory performance in one rotation would be the basis for a "U" grade, and require makeup. A second unexcused absence or unsatisfactory performance ("U") would be the basis for an "F" grade and lead to academic dismissal. A "U" grade may be assigned to a student by the Associate Dean for the PVM Program for an unexcused absence of Junior or Senior Practicum Orientation. For the Junior Practicum, two "U" grades earned in a semester will result in a grade of "F" and lead to academic dismissal. For the Senior Practicum, two "U" grades earned anytime in the 4th year will result in a grade of "F" and lead to academic dismissal.

The Senior Practicum Coordinator must record the grade and return a copy of the evaluation to the student within one week of receiving it from the faculty member.

- E. Students must maintain good academic standing within the PVM Program by achieving a satisfactory "S" grade for all course work in the professional curriculum, and for graduation.
- F. A student whose scholastic progress is unsatisfactory (as judged by the criteria in the following sections) will be subject to probation or dismissal. The Associate Dean for the PVM Program will monitor academic progress of each student and will forward information on any unsatisfactory progress to the Scholastic Standards Committee for

review. The Committee will forward a recommendation for action (based on the following criteria) to the Associate Dean for the PVM Program, who will notify each student of all actions taken.

1. Academic Probation/Academic Warning

- a. Academic probation signifies a level of performance that, if continued, will lead to academic dismissal. Students will be placed on academic probation for the purpose of monitoring and counseling when they receive one "U" grade.
- b. The "U" grade may be converted to an "S" either by additional scholastic work, successful completion of a re-examination, or both as determined by the course coordinator in consultation with course instructors. Re-examinations and make-up assignments to correct performance deficiencies should be coordinated by the Associate Dean for the PVM Program and the course coordinator for review of the basis for a "U" grade and approval of the prescribed corrective plan. The PVM Scholastic Standards Committee should be notified by the Associate Dean for the PVM Program of this action.
- c. Failure to correct the deficiencies within 30 days following the last official instructional day of the semester in which the "U" is received results in automatic conversion of the "U" to an "F", with the following exception. Repetition of a Junior or Senior Practicum rotation may be required to resolve the "U" grade, but the next opportunity to participate in that rotation may only occur more than 30 days following the last official instructional day of the semester. In that case, the student and course coordinator must create a written agreement no later than 30 days following the end of the semester that defers resolution of the "U" until the rotation can be repeated.
- d. A student who accumulates seven credits of "U" in core or elective courses in the PVM Program, even if they are converted to "S" grades, will be given an academic warning that the accumulation of three more credits of "U" in core or elective courses will lead to dismissal, regardless of his/her percentile rank or "H" grade credits. As indicated in section III.D., two "U" grades for rotations in the Junior or Senior Practicum would be the basis for an "F" grade for the semester and lead to academic dismissal.
- e. An "F" grade will lead to academic dismissal.

2. Academic Dismissal

Students will be dismissed who:

- a. do not clear academic probation within the specified time period;
- b. receive the grade of "F" in any VM or elective course; or
- c. accumulate 10 or more credits of "U" in required or elective VM courses.

3. Dismissal Process

- a. The Scholastic Standards Committee and the Dean will be notified by the Associate Dean for the PVM Program that the student has entered the dismissal process, by meeting one of the above criteria.
- b. The Dean will appoint two PVM student representatives to the Committee for the duration of the academic dismissal proceedings.
- c. The student will be asked to document, in writing, any extenuating circumstances that should be taken into consideration during the review of the case. The student will be invited to appear in person before the Committee to make a brief statement during the academic dismissal proceedings.
- d. Recommendations for action concerning each case will be given to the Associate Dean for the PVM Program by the Scholastic Standards Committee.
- e. The Associate Dean for the PVM Program will send a letter to the student indicating the Scholastic Standards Committee's decision regarding dismissal and, if applicable, the basis for and effective date of such action, as well as the procedures and requirements for petitioning for readmission as described under *Appeal for Readmission of Students Dismissed for Academic Reasons*.

IV. Appeal Processes for the PVM Program

A. Appeal of an Individual Course Grade

- 1. A student with an academic grievance concerning a course(s) grade shall follow the procedures described under *Grading and Grade Appeals* in the *University Catalog*, with the following exceptions.
 - a. For courses that employ more than one instructor, the official Course Coordinator is the instructor of record.
 - b. The petitioning student has the responsibility to initiate each appeal in writing to the Associate Dean for the PVM Program before the first day of classes of the next academic semester.
 - c. The PVM Scholastic Standards Committee shall serve as the Appeals Committee.

2. The Scholastic Standards Committee will be joined by two peer PVM students during the hearing of an appeal. The student representatives will be appointed by the Dean.
3. The Associate Dean for the PVM Program will send a letter to the student indicating the Scholastic Standards Committee's decision and the reasons for the decision. Normally the letter will be sent to the student and the instructor(s) within 30 calendar days of the appointment of the committee. The appeal committee's decision is the final decision of the University.

B. Appeal for Readmission of Students Dismissed for Academic Reasons

1. The appeal for readmission shall be in the form of a letter addressed to the Dean of the College stating the case for readmission. The Associate Dean for Admissions and Advising and the Associate Dean for the PVM Program are available for consultation by the student to develop the appeal. A detailed plan for making up unsatisfactory academic performance in the courses that led to dismissal must be included in this letter. Even when satisfactory grades are recorded for repeated course work, the original unsatisfactory course grades are not removed from the student's academic record and will be included in cumulative class rank calculations.
2. The Dean will review the student's appeal for readmission and the plan proposed to correct academic deficiencies. The decision regarding readmission will be contingent upon the successful completion of that plan. Final decision for the College on readmission rests with the Dean.
3. The student may appeal, in writing, the decision of the Dean to the Academic Vice President/Provost of the University, whose decision is final.
4. If successful, the probationary conditions and academic requirements of readmission will be specified in a letter to the student from the Dean.

Appendix

The criteria for an "H" grade should be rigorous, require substantial additional work, and be designed to identify students with outstanding intellectual curiosity, problem-solving abilities, critical and creative thinking skills, and a desire for sustained, self-directed scholarship. Honors criteria are expected to require that a student demonstrate achievement in several of the desirable characteristics of a veterinary graduate listed below. An "H" grade may be assigned for students who fulfill scholarly requirements or assignments in addition to those required for an "S" grade (the general guideline for a "S" grade is a course score of 70% or better which is considered to be equivalent to a C grade or better). It is highly desirable that Honors assignments be in the form of successful completion of the following examples: literature research paper, oral presentation, special project, group activity, authoring a manuscript for publication, scientific data collection and analysis, or other activities that faculty consider relevant to the course and PVM curriculum. Some elective courses with limited enrollment may receive joint approval from the Veterinary Curriculum

Committee and the Scholastic Standards Committee to be designated as Honors courses. If

approved, faculty teaching these courses have the option of giving an "H" grade to all students who successfully complete the requirements of the course. Faculty teaching these elective courses must identify how they require students to demonstrate several of the desirable characteristics listed in the Appendix.

Desirable Characteristics of a Veterinary Graduate to Enhance through Honors Assignments

1. Skill in oral and written communication.
2. Integrated general understanding of the world, its cultures and people.
3. In-depth/advanced understanding of the concepts and principles of the biological sciences.
4. In-depth/advanced knowledge base of veterinary medical science and comparative biomedicine as described in the curriculum requirements.
5. Essentials of scientific and professional behavior to include thoroughness, reliability, efficiency, and critical analysis.
6. Possess problem solving and critical thinking skills.
7. Experience in scientific investigation and scientific processes.
8. Skills in finding and using information and the management of information.
9. Skills and desire for sustained scholarship and lifelong commitment to learning and professional development.
10. Commitment to betterment of humanity and improvement of one's community, society, and the profession.
11. Business and management skills including management of one's personal affairs.
12. Compassion for people, animals, and a reverence for life.
13. Personal integrity and high ethical standards.

Modified from the PNVEP report, *Future Directions for Veterinary Medicine*.