

School of Health, Wellness & Public Safety
**Veterinary Technology
Program**



WELCOME, HISTORY, and LICENSURE

Welcome to the Veterinary Technology Program at CNM! We are pleased that you have chosen to further your education at CNM. We are committed to providing you with a high quality education. We hope that your experience at CNM will be a rewarding one for you.

This handbook has been developed by the faculty to inform you of the policies and regulations of the Program as well as your rights and responsibilities as a student. Please read it and refer to it when you have questions.

The Central New Mexico Community College's Veterinary Technology Program began in 2004 at the request of local veterinarians, veterinary hospital administrators and registered veterinary technicians. Most graduates secure employment in local veterinary hospitals or other professional veterinary related or research centers.

Graduates of the Associate of Applied Science Degree Program are eligible to take the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE) and the New Mexico Board of Veterinary Medicine Veterinary Technician Jurisprudence examination. Successful completion of both of these examinations would allow an individual to apply for licensure with the NMBVM as a registered veterinary technician (RVT).

In the event of a conflict between information contained in the student handbook and the CNM catalog, the catalog takes precedence. Students are responsible to know the information contained in the CNM Catalog and Student Handbook.

The faculty has the right to make additions or deletions to the student handbook. The students will be informed of these changes by oral announcements in class and written announcements posted on the designated bulletin boards.

Program Officials

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ACCREDITATION

The Veterinary Technology Program is accredited by the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#).

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[Program Description](#) [link to catalog]

[Program Curriculum and course descriptions](#) (link to catalog)

PROGRAM VISION, MISSION, GOAL, & COMPETENCIES

Vision: The Veterinary Technology Program will be the premier training center for Veterinary Technicians in New Mexico with recognition for excellence by national, state and local organizations, practitioners and other employers of Veterinary Technicians.

Mission: A. Fulfill the need for veterinary technicians in local and regional communities

B. Provide an educational environment which fosters self-awareness, self-confidence and promotes professional growth in each student

Goal: The CNM Veterinary Technology Program endeavors to develop and graduate students of high integrity and professionalism; students prepared to provide excellent care to animals small and large, and motivated toward a career and committed to lifelong learning as they pursue the veterinary technician profession.

EXIT COMPETENCIES

Upon completion of the CNM Veterinary Technology Program, graduates will be able to demonstrate the ability to:

1. participate in facility management utilizing traditional and electronic media and appropriate veterinary medical terminology and abbreviations; communicate in a professional manner in all formats – written, oral, non-verbal, and electronic; and follow and uphold applicable laws and codes of ethics of the veterinary technology profession to provide high quality care to patients.
2. administer prescribed drugs to patients safely and effectively.
3. demonstrate and perform patient assessment techniques in a variety of animal species; understand and demonstrate husbandry, nutrition, therapeutic and dentistry techniques appropriate to various species.
4. demonstrate the ability to manage patients in all phases of anesthetic procedures safely and effectively; select, utilize and maintain anesthetic delivery and monitoring instruments and equipment in a safe and effective manner.
5. understand and integrate all aspects of patient management for common surgical procedures in a variety of animal species; understand and provide the proper instruments, supplies and environment to maintain asepsis during surgical procedures.
6. package, handle and store specimens for laboratory analysis properly, and carry out analysis of laboratory specimens properly.
7. produce diagnostic radiographic and nonradiographic images safely and effectively.
8. handle laboratory animals commonly used in animal research safely and effectively.
9. understand the approach to providing safe and effective care for birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, rabbits, and ferrets.

[CODE OF ETHICS](#) (Link to NAVTA code of ethics)

ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY

As a student at CNM, you are preparing yourself to be a valuable asset to your future employer as a veterinary technician. Part of the preparation is learning to be on time and in class every day. When you enter the workforce as a veterinary technician the expectation will be that you are dependable, punctual and prepared for work. The faculty also believes that students cannot learn effectively if they are absent from classroom, lab and clinical activities. Refer to individual course syllabi for specific attendance policies.

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

Students must earn a grade of "C" or better in all required program courses. The Veterinary Technology Program curricula are sequentially designed to proceed from basic concepts of veterinary care to complex concepts involved in veterinary medicine. Students who fail any of the veterinary technology courses (theory, lab, or clinical) will not be allowed to continue in the Program. Students may re-enter the following year on a space available basis.

READMISSION POLICY

1. The student must provide written notice to the director of the program of their desire to reenter the Program.
2. Students will be readmitted according to the policy listed above, but faculty may require course review, class audit, and/or clinical orientation prior to the readmission date.
3. The faculty may request that the student develop a success plan with the assistance of the HWPS Achievement Coach prior to, or even during, the term of readmission.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

A 2.0 GPA is needed to graduate (this includes all coursework at CNM). All students must complete a graduation application during the last term of attendance.

GRADING

The following grading policies apply to all veterinary technology courses of the curriculum. Theory, Lab and Clinical grades are based on a variety of activities and assignments designated by the faculty. The criteria by which grades are determined for each theory and clinical course are included in the course syllabi distributed to students at the beginning of each semester.

The grading scale for the veterinary technology courses is:

91 - 100 = A

81 - 90 = B

71 - 80 = C

61 - 70 = D

Below 60 = F

< 71 = Unsatisfactory (D or F)

1. Progress reports (grades) may be given at midterm in the veterinary technology courses. These grades are not a part of the student's permanent records. Final grades are issued at the end of each semester and are reflected on the student's transcript.
2. The faculty strongly endorses the idea that **each student takes responsibility for knowing his/her own academic status**. At any time that a student has unsatisfactory averages, he/she should contact the instructor for assistance. Tutorial assistance can be provided for a student who is not progressing satisfactorily in the veterinary technology courses.

UNIFORMS AND APPEARANCE

Students are expected to be neat and clean and appear professional at all times in both the classroom and the clinical setting. Uniforms should be appropriate to the classroom or veterinary facility, and provide for freedom of movement. Student identification must be worn in a clinical setting. For safety issues, appropriate undergarments will be worn with the uniform, and will not be visible through the outer layers of clothing.

- For all on campus class sessions (VT lecture and labs): Smock tops (uniform tops) will be worn (print or solid colors). Suitable uniform pants, or neat jeans or slacks, will accompany the smock tops (no holes and neat hems).
- For all off-campus lab sessions, and for the clinical placements: The CNM provided uniform will be worn. Students may purchase additional tops and pants in the *same color*. The CNM Veterinary Technology Student patch will be neatly sewn on the left arm of each uniform top (additional patches may be purchased from the bookstore).
- For special events: The faculty will state the attire for special labs (equine, etc.) or for other functions that the class may attend (special guest speakers or community veterinary meetings). Students will be expected to comply with such requests.
- For anatomy labs: A long sleeve shirt cover-up will be worn to protect your smock top.
- For clinical pathology labs: The CNM provided white lab coat will be worn to protect your smock top.
- For special events (equine labs, farm visits, or guest speaker meetings) the faculty will state the appropriate foot wear. Students will be expected to comply with such requests.
- Students should be prepared with boots or sturdy shoes for farm visits, and students who are placed at VDS as a clinical site should purchase their own rubber boots (easily hosed clean).
- Long hair must be secured while working with animals or performing technical skills.

JEWELRY – for safety concerns, the following limits will be adhered to

- One watch with a conservative band – having a second hand is recommended.
- Two rings total – avoid high settings for safety to animals, co-workers, and for performing technical skills.
- Earrings are limited to two total – maximum ½ inch below ear lobe; no hoops or anything loose and dangling.
- Visible body piercings are prohibited (nose, tongue, cheek, chin, eyebrow, etc.)
- For safety reasons – no chokers or long necklaces, or bracelets will be worn while working with animals or performing technical skills.

A professional appearance should be conveyed at all times. The faculty may address matters to the class or individuals as necessary. Discussions regarding attire between the instructor and individual students will be documented; a first warning will be discussed with the student. Subsequent breaches of attire could result in being dismissed from a class for that day (counting an absence), or being asked to return in appropriate attire.

[FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES FOR PROGRAM STUDENTS \(link to O*net data\)](#)

ADVISORY BOARD

As a means for the Central New Mexico Community College Veterinary Technology Program to connect with the community at large, and specifically to the needs of the veterinary community in New Mexico, an Advisory Committee has been established. Members include:

Veterinarians

Registered Veterinary Technicians

Representatives from State Boards and Associations

Representatives from industry (pharmaceutical companies, laboratories)

Representatives from academia

Representatives from the City of Albuquerque Animal Services

Public members

CNM administrators, faculty and staff

(Campus Administration, Deans, Program Directors, Academic Advisement, Student Job Placement Services, Achievement Coach, Faculty and Staff)

For a current list of the Chair and members of this committee, please contact the HWPS office or the Veterinary Technology Program Director.

CLINICAL POLICIES

There are three clinical courses in the Veterinary Technology Program. Students are placed at 4 or 5 different facilities during the Program. Extenuating circumstances may affect individual student placements to this plan.

Each course has primary objectives, although the specific tasks exposed to or accomplished will depend upon the placement hours of the student, the focus of the facility (small animal, mixed, institutional, etc.), and the daily client load or procedures as scheduled by the facility for their normal day to day needs.

At all times, students should seek to OBSERVE specific protocols, ASSIST or PARTICIPATE as they are allowed, and ABSORB new ways to accomplish even the most familiar of tasks. Quite often, in veterinary medicine there are a variety of means to accomplish the same task and the student should never dictate to a facility how they have accomplished a similar task elsewhere, unless they are

specifically asked from the current facility for such input.

[Student Removal from an Off-Campus Instructional Site, or On-Campus Laboratory, Serving Clients/Patients Policy \(link\)](#)

[Suspected Impairment Policy \(link\)](#)

SAFETY: PRECAUTIONS, AWARENESS, AND PROTOCOLS

The practice of veterinary medicine naturally presents an environment that has occupational hazards and concerns. These include, but are not limited to, animals of various sizes and strengths, with unpredictable attitudes, and natural defenses such as claws, teeth and hooves; zoonotic concerns; radiological exposure; and exposure to potential chemicals (anesthetic agents, cleaners, laboratory materials, and some medications). Yet, veterinary medicine indeed continues to be practiced 'safely' applying standard operating procedures that are generally accepted by state, national or federal regulatory agencies and boards.

As students perform tasks at the various facilities:

- remain alert to potential hazards.
- employ the safety protocols that have been discussed in previous veterinary technology courses.
- inquire at each facility of specific hazards unique to the animals/species cared for at the facility.
- seek to locate safety equipment such as eye wash stations, showers, fire extinguishers, safety goggles, radiological protective gowns, sharps containers, etc.
- lift animals or objects incorporating proper physical techniques (bending at the knees, etc.).
- apply the use of personal protective equipment as appropriate (gloves, masks, gowns, etc.) and hands should be washed frequently.
- dress appropriately for the facility; avoid loose, dangling, and excessive jewelry; wear proper shoes for the specific environment (closed toed shoes, boots in a barn environment, rubber soled shoes providing firm grips – no high heels); coats, hats, gloves as appropriate to weather and tasks.
- ASK the regular staff members about any particular concerns for the care and handling of a specific species or individual patient.
- HEED the advice and warnings of seasoned staff members - DO NOT TAKE UNNECESSARY CHANCES or behave unwisely in actions, attempting to 'prove yourself' to the staff.

Please discuss any safety concerns directly with the preceptor at the facility, and/or with the Program Clinical Coordinator.

The CNM harassment policy applies during/at clinical placements; immediately report to the Clinical Coordinator any infractions or concerns in this area.

DOSIMETRY BADGES: All students will wear the CNM dosimetry badge at the clinical placements. If your badge is not on your uniform, you cannot restrain for radiographs, or be within the room when radiographs are exposed. Please keep in mind that being unprepared for assisting during radiographs

could have a direct effect on evaluations and clinical grade. All students directly involved in any exposure will place their initials along with "CNM" in the appropriate facility log next to the data specifying the radiographic procedure, and complete their student radiography log. Appropriate lead shielding will be utilized by all students in the proximity of the primary beam and exposure field.

AVMA Position on Veterinary Facility Occupational Risks for Pregnant Workers

(Approved by AVMA Executive Board November 2004)

Although scientific data concerning the reproductive health effects of many occupational exposures is limited, the goal of creating a safe work environment for pregnant workers can be facilitated by awareness of inherent risks and then adopting procedures to minimize risk exposure.

This information, along with all safety guidelines and procedures, should be communicated to all workers, regardless of their gender or reproductive status. The key to a safe working environment is communication, planning ahead, and educating your workers on how to use protective equipment properly, and avoiding unnecessary risks.

Any pregnant workers or workers planning to become pregnant should consult with their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the worker to communicate their needs to their manager as soon as possible in order for risk reduction to begin when it can be most effective, and also to determine if additional reasonable accommodations are necessary and if they can be made.

Areas requiring special attention to risk reduction include:

- Radiological - X-ray exposure presents a significant risk to the pregnant worker. Ideally, all exposure should be avoided. If this is not possible, the pregnant worker must, as all workers should, wear appropriate shielding protection and wear a monitoring badge. Pregnant workers should never, under any circumstances, hold film cassettes in place during radiographic procedures.
- Biological
 1. Rabies and tetanus are preventable through vaccination and all workers should have vaccinations as recommended by the worker's healthcare provider in conjunction with current CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations.
 2. Diseases such as salmonellosis, brucellosis, leptospirosis, and chlamydiosis present hazards associated with fever and the drugs used in treatment. Diseases such as Venezuelan equine encephalitis and listeriosis have direct harmful effects on the developing fetus. Awareness of the agents and exposure avoidance is very important, when possible.
 3. Toxoplasmosis is known to cause damage to the developing fetus. Exposure to cat feces should be avoided by pregnant workers. If this is not possible, then protective

gloves and thorough hand washing must be employed. Since *Toxoplasma oocysts* are not infectious for the first 24 hours after shedding, litter boxes should be cleaned and feces removed completely every 24 hours.

4. The hazards associated with animal bites, wound infections and cat scratch disease are proportional to the severity of the wound and the resultant treatment. The use of protective gloves, thorough hand washing and chemical restraint of fractious and aggressive animals reduce these risks.
- Chemical
 1. Care should be used when handling any pesticide, hormone or chemotherapeutic agent. Read and understand the warnings on the label and circular. Pregnant workers should not apply pesticides. If this is not possible, adequate ventilation of the area is essential and absorption through the skin should be minimized through the use of protective gloves, aprons and coveralls. Handling of hormones and chemotherapeutic agents require the same precautions.
 2. Exposure to high levels of anesthetic gases by pregnant workers is known to increase the incidence of miscarriages and congenital abnormalities in newborns. Ideally, pregnant workers should not be exposed to anesthetic gases. If this is not possible, special attention should be paid to the maintenance of anesthetic machines to assure leak free operation and efficient scavenger systems used to remove waste gases.
 3. A Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) manual should be readily available for reference by all workers. Additional information on MSDS can be found on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Web site at www.osha.gov.
 - Regulatory Issues
 1. The **Pregnancy Discrimination Act** (an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Additional information is on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Web site at www.eeoc.gov.
 2. The **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** requires that covered employers must grant eligible employees up to a total of 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12 month period for various reasons including the employee's own serious health condition and for the care of a newborn child. Additional information can be found on the Department of Labor Web site at www.dol.gov.
 3. The **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)** primarily provides rights and protections for participants and beneficiaries in group health plans, but also prohibits discrimination against employees and dependents based on their health status and protects the confidentiality of an employee's health information. Additional information may also be found at www.dol.gov.
 4. The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act mentioned above states disabilities caused or contributed to by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions shall be treated the same as disabilities caused or contributed to by other medical conditions for all job-related purposes. Therefore the ADA may be applicable in certain situations. More information is available on the DOL Web site at www.dol.gov.

References

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For more information, please contact: Membership & Field Services, Council on Veterinary Service

American Veterinary Medical Association

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