

## **VMC 921: Special Topics in Zoological Medicine**

### **COURSE SYLLABUS, 2015-2016**

**Department of Clinical Sciences (DoCS)  
College of Veterinary Medicine  
North Carolina State University**

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### III. Course Description

- Variable 1-3 credit hours
- Course is offered across fall & spring semesters and both Summer Sessions
- The minimum/maximum number for this course is 0/80 students
- For 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> year veterinary students
- This elective course provides partial fulfillment of the Zoological Medicine Focus area requirement for elective course credit

This elective course allows students to participate in customized laboratory, field, and wet lab experiences in zoological medicine. Zoological medicine is a broadly comparative discipline that includes health management of captive and free ranging avian, aquatic, reptile, amphibian, invertebrate, and mammalian species. The curriculum of this course is designed to be adapted to the needs of students in the DVM program who desire practical experiences in the discipline. The details of individual projects and experiences are developed by the course coordinator and participating faculty to meet those needs and can include on campus and/or off campus experiences. Examples of past experiences that qualify for this course include: established courses such as AQUAVET, ENVIROVET, MARVET, and SEAVET, participation in dolphin or sea turtle health assessment projects, marine mammal strandings or necropsies, etc.

### IV. Course Objectives

Though additional specific objectives may be developed for any particular experience, the following objectives are considered the basic foundation of the course expectations. At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to:

- Know the anatomy and necropsy procedures for the specific species in their project.

- Know how to safely capture, restrain, and immobilize the specific species in their project.
- Know how and where to collect diagnostic samples for the specific species in their project
- Understand and convey the challenges of working with wildlife species.
- Understand and convey key aspects of the natural history of the species they are studying.
- Be able to function well in an interdisciplinary team environment.

V. Class time, location, schedule

The schedule for this course is determined for each student based on the schedule of the project(s) they will participate on in consultation with the faculty project leader.

VI. Test Schedule and Final Exam – not applicable

VII. Recommended & Optional Textbooks

There are no specific textbooks required or recommended for this course. However, the NCSU libraries are an excellent resource for textbooks and journals (print and electronic) for topics related to various projects. Project leaders may require outside reading assignments.

VIII. Attendance Policy

Students are expected to follow the attendance policy that is specific to each experience (excused absences must be approved by the instructor, with provisions to make up missed activities, based upon the instructor's recommendations).

IX. Grading and Project Documentation (course assignments)

- This elective course will be graded on a Pass / Fail basis, as determined by group consensus among teaching personnel involved in the experience. Students will be assessed on the basis of their fulfillment of the objectives, knowledge and active participation in their projects. There are no exams as an official part of this course, but may be included in some experiences (i.e., Aquavet training program).
- The students must document their participation in a minimum of two projects (except for established training programs, as noted earlier), for a minimum total of 5 full days of effort per credit hour. Documentation must include a one-page (minimum) description of each project that they participated in, including the date(s) of the project, the NCSU (or other) faculty project leaders, location, a summary of results and important findings (& interesting things seen or learned), and photographs (as a supplement to the one page document), as applicable.
- Written documentation must include the instructor/project coordinator's signature of approval, a certificate of satisfactory completion (i.e., after finishing an established training program), or a copy of an email correspondence noting the project coordinator's approval that the student performed satisfactorily.
- All requested documentation must be submitted to the course coordinator by noon on the last day of classes, of the semester of registration. Students are expected to contact the course coordinator with any questions about any projects and to get

prior approval for all projects. Students are also encouraged to contact different teaching faculty for information about project ideas and logistics.

- Students are encouraged but not required to write up their projects as a case report or research paper for submission to student manuscript competitions, conferences, and/or publication when applicable.

#### X. Incomplete Policy

If students are unable to meet all of the attendance requirements of the course, they should request a withdrawal from the course before the published university deadline for dropping a course. Failure to meet course requirements can result in an incomplete grade. University policies state that an incomplete grade must be completed within one semester. A failing grade will be given at the end of the following fall semester if the student fails to complete the course satisfactorily. Students should not sign up for this course if they are not certain that they can meet the course requirements.

#### XI. Code of Conduct

Students should observe the policies stated in the CVM Student Handbook. Students are expected to observe all components of the CVM "Code of Conduct" as detailed in the CVM Student Handbook and conduct themselves as professionals in all matters, including honesty and ethics.

#### XII. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653.

#### XIII. Other Important Policy Information

1. Projects in this course may extend across the boundaries of semesters. Registration is with permission of the course coordinator in the semester most appropriate for the project as a whole.
2. **Very Important - To receive elective credit for this course, all projects must be approved by the course coordinator in advance.**
3. Projects can include regular annual events such as bear necropsies, sea turtle health assessments, and dolphin health assessments, as well as summer internships at a wildlife rehabilitation program, stranded marine mammal necropsies, seabird necropsy labs, etc. Information about these and other events is often available through WAAZM announcements or postings on the WAAZM bulletin board.
4. Other established training options can also be considered, such as AquaVet, MarVet, AquaMed, and Envirovet training programs (these training programs are applicable for one credit hour per week).
5. For 1 credit hour each student is expected to participate in at least two different projects that encompass at least 5 full (minimum 8 hour) days of experiences (except as noted under 4. above for established training programs). For example, two half-day experiences can count toward one fifth of the course requirements, but only one day can be recorded

in a 24 hour period. We encourage students to gain experiences with a variety of opportunities and faculty project leaders.

6. Projects that meet requirements for other elective or selective opportunities will not be applicable for this course (i.e., double credit will not be given).
7. All students are required to supply their own pens, pencils, sharpie markers, penlight, stethoscope, watch with a second hand, calculator, and/or any other necessary supplies needed during the experience. Other required materials (coveralls, boots, lab coats, scrub suits, safety equipment and other supplies) will vary with each experience. It is the students' responsibility to find out what they need to provide for each opportunity.
8. Students are required to be current with tetanus and rabies vaccinations. Other vaccinations may be required, depending upon the project and location.
9. As applicable, students are required to meet all Lab Animal Resources certification requirements and comply with all IACUC, institutional, and/or endangered species permit guidelines when working with non-client owned animals.
10. It is the student's responsibility to arrange their schedules and work with DVM course instructors to prevent or minimize conflicts with labs, exams, and other important components of their core veterinary training.
11. All transportation, meals, and housing related to various projects are the students' responsibility unless specifically stated otherwise by the project leader.