



***Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) Program  
Grading Policies and Procedures and Professional and Scholastic Standards***

**I. Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) Committee on Scholastic and Professional Standards (DCSPS)**

The DCSPS makes recommendations to the CVMBS faculty, Associate Dean for Veterinary Academic and Student Affairs (AD), and Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences regarding academic and professional standards, policies and procedures for the DVM Program. It also serves as an appeals body for student grievances relating to academic or professional matters within the DVM Program. The Committee may assume management of cases brought before the DVM student Honor Board if both entities deem such action appropriate. The Committee consists of five CSU DVM faculty members representing the preclinical and clinical DVM Program, one faculty member representing the University of Alaska Fairbanks DVM Program, and two fourth year DVM student representatives appointed by the AD each May. The AD serves in a nonvoting advisory role, receives Committee recommendations, and incorporates Committee recommendations into determination of final actions. Student appeals of AD decisions are directed to the Dean of the CVMBS.

The College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences “DVM Grading Policies and Procedures and Professional and Scholastic Standards” document contains material pertinent to academic standards, academic probation, dismissal from the DVM Program, and appeals processes. Scholastic standards, policies, and procedures for undergraduate and graduate students in the College are those of the University, and are described in the [“Academic Standards and Policies” section of the CSU General Catalog](#). The [DVM Code of Honor](#), [Veterinarian’s Oath](#), and [Essential Functions Policy](#) contain material pertinent to professional conduct.

Any question of interpretation of the DVM Grading Policies and Procedures and Professional and Scholastic Standards document may be referred to the AD, in consultation with the Dean, for final determination.

**II. Grades and Scoring for VM courses**

- A. The course coordinator and faculty of the course (with approval from the DVM 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 69.5% or better (considered to be equivalent to a(n) S/C grade or better). Raw scores may be curved, normalized or otherwise adjusted as necessary to provide a cutoff equivalent to 69.5%.

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale, beginning with the class of 2016:

$\geq 89.5\%$	A
$\geq 79.5\%$ and $< 89.5\%$	B
$\geq 69.5\%$ and $< 79.5\%$	C
$\geq 64.5\%$ and $< 69.5\%$	D
$< 64.5\%$	F

The following was applied to the class of 2015 and years prior:

$69.5 \leq S < 100\%$
$64.5 \leq U/D < 69.5 \%$
$F < 64.5\%$

As per university policy, a course coordinator may choose to incorporate +/- grading. University guidelines for grading may be found at:

<http://registrar.colostate.edu/media/sites/29/2014/12/Grade-Received-GPA-chart.pdf> Course coordinators may modify these grading scales at their discretion. The grading strategy, whether conventional or modified, must be defined in the course syllabus.

- B. For all classes, student performance within the third year practicum is assessed using a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) designation. The third year practicum is not included in the courses used to establish class standing.
- C. A grade of D is assigned when the total number of points earned is  $\geq 64.5$  and  $< 69.5\%$ , with  $69.5\%$  being the passing grade. In those courses in which a passing grade (equivalent to a C grade or better) is other than  $69.5\%$ , the percentages associated with a D grade must be specified in the course syllabus.
- D. 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  $< 64.5\%$ . In those courses in which a passing grade (equivalent to a(n) S/C grade or better) is other than  $69.5\%$ , the percentages associated with an F grade must be specified.
- E. If a student receives a D or F grade in an elective course, the student will not be able to remediate and will not receive credit for the course. The D or F grade will be recorded on the transcript and will count toward overall GPA as well as the maximum allowance of nine D credits. If the grade in the elective course results in an overall GPA  $< 2.0$ , the student will be placed on academic probation. The student must attain a cumulative GPA  $\geq 2.0$  by the end of the subsequent semester. Failure to achieve a cumulative GPA  $\geq 2.0$  within one semester will result in academic dismissal.

- F. A grade of I is assigned when a student has not yet finished the requirements of a course because of illness or extenuating circumstances, determined by the AD. This grade is NOT to be used when a student cannot achieve satisfactory academic standing in the course.
- G. [CSU Registrar](#) policies apply to course withdrawal options.
- H. Please see the DVM policy entitled [Grading, Senior Practicum Evaluations, Student Course Rank and Class Standing](#). Third year DVM students ranking in the top 10 percent or better, and fourth Year DVM students ranking in the top 25 percent 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.

### **III. Academic Standards for the DVM Program**

- A. Though reasonable efforts will be made to proactively contact students who are at risk for academic probation and/or dismissal, each DVM student is responsible for tracking his/her performance within each DVM course, and contacting relevant persons (e.g. instructors, course coordinators, counselor, Associate Dean) for assistance and support in improving performance.
- B. Students are required to fulfill all published course requirements for completion of work assignments, successful achievement of evaluation criteria, and attendance during 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. Details relevant to attendance are outlined in the [CVMBS DVM Class Attendance Policy](#). In the event of a dispute under this policy, individuals may appeal using procedures described under Appeal Processes for the DVM Program.
- C. Students may be required to pass a comprehensive final examination, project or practical 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 students in the procedures taught during the third and fourth year practicums.
- D. For the third and fourth year practicums, each rotation is an assignment that must be fully attended and mastered. Each faculty member responsible for a practicum rotation must complete a critique of performance for each student, and assign a grade. The critique and grade must be submitted through One45 to the Third and

Fourth Year Student Coordinator no later than two weeks after the end of the rotation for which the grade is given.

Any student showing indications of performing unsatisfactorily should be identified and alerted as early in the rotation as possible, at minimum by the end of the first week of a two-week rotation and by the end of the second week of a three-week rotation. Specific critiques/comments should be made in written form and discussed with the student. If the student is in danger of failing, the student should be alerted to the possibility and this should be included in the written report. All students performing unsatisfactorily should be given specific performance benchmarks to define what is necessary for successful completion of rotation requirements. Any subsequent meetings or discussions should likewise be documented and conveyed in writing (electronically). All documentation should be sent to the Third and Fourth Year Student Coordinator for tracking and record keeping purposes. Though proactive communication of unsatisfactory performance is the standard, students who earn an unsatisfactory grade based on performance in the latter portion of the rotation (i.e. leaving insufficient time for remediation within the scheduled rotation) or an end-of-rotation assessment may be assigned a U/D grade and be required to repeat the rotation in the absence of forewarning. When late rotation performance accounts for a U/D grade in light of satisfactory performance early in the rotation, changes in personnel and/or interpersonal issues will be given due consideration.

If a student receives a U/D grade for a rotation, the faculty overseeing the rotation will convey the grade and a written evaluation to the student in the One45 system and alert the Faculty Practicum Coordinator, the Third and Fourth Year Student Coordinator and the AD of the student's performance by email, within three business days of the end of the rotation. Within one week of receiving the information, the Faculty Practicum Coordinator must record the grade and return one copy of the full evaluation to the student, and inform the AD of the student's performance. The goal of this process should be to identify limitations, strategies for improvement and resources required so that the student may optimize opportunities for success during a make-up rotation, if the grade did not result in dismissal from the program. The faculty member assigning the grade should inform the student that he/she must consult with the Third and Fourth Year Student Coordinator to schedule a make-up rotation within eight weeks of receiving the failing grade, and that he/she may appeal the grade (see Scholastic Standards Policy Section IV). All communications are to be documented electronically or in writing for inclusion in the student record.

An unexcused absence or unsatisfactory performance in one rotation (a U/D grade) would require makeup. For the third year practicum, two U grades earned in a semester will result in a grade of F and lead to academic dismissal. For the fourth year practicum, two D grades earned anytime in the fourth year will result in a grade of F and lead to academic dismissal. A U/D grade may be assigned to a

student by the Faculty Practicum Coordinator for an unexcused absence from the third and/or fourth year practicum orientation.

- E. To graduate, students must maintain good academic standing within the DVM Program by achieving a(n) S or C grade ( $\geq 69.5\%$ ) for all required course work in the professional curriculum. Each semester in the DVM program is considered a prerequisite to the next.
- F. A student whose scholastic progress is unsatisfactory (as judged by the criteria in the following sections) will be subject to probation or dismissal.
  - i. Academic Probation/Academic Warning
    1. Academic probation signifies a level of performance that, if continued, may lead to academic dismissal. Students will be placed on academic probation when they have earned a D or F grade at midterm, for the purpose of monitoring and counseling by the AD which may include discussions regarding learning disability assistance, tutoring, psychological support and time management/study skills, as appropriate.
    2. In order for a student to progress in the program, the U/D grade must be converted to a(n) S/C either by additional scholastic work, successful completion of a re-examination, or both as determined by the course coordinator in consultation with course instructors. The remediation may be an isolated exercise (i.e. successful remediation does not require integration of the remediation score into the overall course grade). Regardless of the performance on the remediation exercise, the highest grade that may replace the U/D grade is a(n) S/C (69.5%). The comment “Remediated original D grade” will appear on the transcript. Successful remediation will terminate probationary status. Re-examinations and make-up assignments to correct performance deficiencies should be coordinated by the AD and the course coordinator for review of the basis for a U or D grade and approval of the prescribed corrective plan. The DCSPS should be notified of the remediation by the AD.
    3. Failure to correct the deficiencies within 30 days (or within a time designated by the coordinator that is not to exceed 60 days) following the last official instructional day of the semester in which the U or D grade is received results in automatic conversion to an F, with the following exception: repetition of a third or fourth year practicum rotation may be required to resolve the U/D 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/D until the rotation can be repeated.

4. A student who accumulates seven credits of U and/or D in core courses in the DVM Program, even if they are converted to S/C grades, will be given an academic warning indicating that the accumulation of three more credits of U and/or D in core courses will lead to dismissal, regardless of his/her percentile rank. As indicated in section III.D, two U grades in one semester for rotations in the third year practicum, and two D grades in one year for rotations in the fourth year practicum, would be the basis for an F grade and lead to academic dismissal, regardless of cumulative U and/or D grades.

ii. Academic Dismissal

1. Students will be dismissed who
  - a. Do not clear academic probation within the specified time period by either reverting a U/D to an S/C grade, or raising the cumulative GPA  $\geq 2.0$  within one academic semester
  - b. Receive the grade of F in any required VM course.
  - c. Accumulate 10 or more credits of U and/or D in required VM courses.
  - d. Do not successfully remediate a Capstone examination or fail to complete part or all of a Capstone examination without an excused absence (<http://csu-cvmb.colostate.edu/Documents/dvm-policy-capstone.pdf>).

iii. Dismissal and Reentry Petition Process

1. The student, DCSPS and the Dean will be notified by the AD that the student has been dismissed, by meeting one of the above criteria.
2. Should the student wish to petition for readmission to the DVM Program, he/she must convey his/her intent to the AD within 14 days of receiving the notification of dismissal. Subsequently, the student must generate a letter to the DCSPS (via the AD) that characterizes any extenuating circumstances and other facts that should be considered during review of the case. The student must identify the factors contributing to poor academic performance and strategies for resolution/management of the factors to ensure future academic success. The student will then be invited to appear in person before the Committee to make a brief statement during the academic dismissal proceedings. Individuals who may benefit deliberations by providing needed expertise (e.g. psychologist, Capstone Coordinator) may be asked to appear before the Committee at the discretion of the AD.

3. Recommendations for action concerning each case, determined by a majority vote, will be given to the AD by the DCSPS, to include whether the student may be readmitted and if so, the requirements for readmission.
4. The AD will send a letter to the student indicating the DCSPS recommendations and final decision regarding dismissal. If the petition is successful, the academic and other (e.g. counseling, health management) requirements of readmission will be specified in a letter to the student from the AD. Student reentry into the DVM program will be contingent upon successful completion of the requirements and final approval from the AD.
5. The policy describing tuition payment and student categorization in the case of provisional dismissal can be viewed on the [DVM Student Resources page](#).
6. Should readmission be granted, regardless of the grades achieved for repeated course work, the highest grade that may replace the D grade is a C or 69.5% (or in the case of the third year practicum, the highest grade that may replace the U grade is an S).

#### **IV. Professional Standards for the DVM Program**

- A. The [DVM Code of Honor](#), [Veterinarian's Oath](#), and [Essential Functions Policy](#) contain material pertinent to professional conduct.
- B. A student who does not comply with professional standards, as judged by the criteria in the aforementioned resources, may be subject to probation or dismissal at the advisement of the DCSPS. In association with probation, the Committee may recommend to the AD mandated interventions such as conflict resolution, counseling, substance abuse treatment, or anger management training. As appropriate, cases may be referred to the CSU Office of Support and Safety Assessment, or to appropriate city, county, state, or federal agencies.

#### **V. Appeal Processes for the DVM Program**

- A. Appeal of an Individual Course Grade
  - i. A student with an academic grievance concerning a course grade shall follow the procedures described under Grading and Grade Appeals in the University Catalog, with the following exceptions.
    1. For courses that employ more than one instructor, the official course coordinator is the instructor of record.
    2. The petitioning student has the responsibility to initiate each appeal in writing to the AD before the first day of classes of the next academic semester.
    3. The DCSPS shall serve as the Appeals Committee.

- ii. The AD will send a letter to the student and instructor(s) indicating the decision of the DCSPS and the reasons for the decision within 30 calendar days of the Committee decision. The decision of the Committee is the final decision of the University.

#### B. Appeal of Dismissal

- i. Should a student wish to appeal a dismissal for a reason other than an individual course grade, he/she must document extenuating circumstances and other facts relevant to the case, and submit the appeal in writing to the AD within 14 days of receiving the notification of dismissal. The AD will inform the DCSPS of the appeal and provide relevant documentation, and the student will be invited to appear in person before the Committee to make a brief statement. Individuals who may benefit the deliberations by providing any needed expertise (e.g. psychologist, Capstone Coordinator) may be asked to appear before the Committee at the discretion of the AD.
- ii. Recommendations for action concerning each case, determined by a majority vote, will be given to the AD by the DCSPS.
- iii. The AD will send a letter to the student indicating the DCSPS recommendations and final 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 Section III.
- iv. If the appeal is successful, any conditions for termination of dismissed status will be specified in the letter to the student from the AD.

#### C. Final reentry, grade and dismissal appeals

- i. If a student wishes to appeal reentry, grade, probation or dismissal decisions by the AD under advisement of the DCSPS, he/she may do so in the form of an appeal letter directed to the Dean of College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. The letter must include the proposed alternative outcome, any associated plans or requirements, and all facts supporting the appeal.
- ii. The Dean will review the appeal letter and render a decision that will serve as the final decision of the University.
- iii. The decision will be communicated to the student in a letter from the Dean. If the appeal is successful, any requirements will be specified in the letter. Determination of fulfillment of requirements rests with the Dean.