

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. WELCOME TO THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE!

We want to welcome each new graduate student to the **College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM)**. As a student in the **Master of Science (MS) in Veterinary Medical Sciences (VMS)** program, we believe that you will find outstanding educational opportunities available to you at the University of Florida. We sincerely hope that your graduate program here is a rich and rewarding experience. The purpose of this Handbook is to help provide the information you will need to plan, conduct and complete your graduate program successfully.

B. ORGANIZATION

The Graduate School of the University of Florida is responsible for the enforcement of minimum general standards of graduate work in the University and the overall coordination of all graduate programs in the University. As an umbrella organization, the Graduate School cuts across academic disciplines (such as colleges and departments) and consists of the dean, an associate dean, the Graduate Council, and the graduate faculty (from all academic disciplines).

The CVM is administered by:

Dr. Dana Zimmer, Dean
Dr. Amanda House, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs
Dr. Michael Mison, Associate Dean of Clinical Services for Small Animal Operations
Dr. Chris Sanchez, Associate Dean of Clinical Services for Large Animal Operations

Dr. Janet Robishaw, Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies | robishawj@ufl.edu
Dr. Rowan Milner, Director for Clinical & Translational Research | milnerr@ufl.edu
Dr. Jorge Hernandez, Director for Graduate Education | hermandezja@ufl.edu
Ms. Sara Rubinstein, Academic Program Specialist | s.rubinstein@ufl.edu

There are five academic departments within the CVM:

Comparative, Diagnostic and Population Medicine (CDPM)

Dr. Subhashinie Kariyawasam, Department Chair
Dr. Heather Walden, Department Graduate Coordinator | hstockdale@ufl.edu

Infectious Diseases and Immunology (IDI)

Dr. Clayton Mathews, Department Chair
Dr. Mary Brown, Department Graduate Coordinator | mbbrown@ufl.edu

Physiological Sciences (PS)

Dr. Jada Lewis, Department Chair

Dr. John Bowden, Department Graduate Coordinator | john.bowden@ufl.edu

Large Animal Clinical Sciences (LACS)

Dr. Dianne McFarlane, Department Chair

Dr. Iske Larkin, Department Graduate Coordinator | ivlarkin@ufl.edu

Small Animal Clinical Sciences (SACS)

Dr. Charles Vite, Department Chair

Dr. Domenico Santoro, Department Graduate Coordinator | dsantoro@ufl.edu

C. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Whereas the Graduate School sets minimum requirements and provides overall coordination, the responsibilities for setting detailed requirements and managing detailed operations of graduate programs are vested within the CVM. This is quite important to the student because it means there are two sets of requirements that the student must meet to graduate. You must satisfy both the Graduate School and CVM requirements in order to obtain your graduate degree.

A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for the MS degree in Veterinary Medical Sciences.

Starting Fall 2020, all new CVM MSc students must fulfill the following minimum requirements for successful completion of their degree (in addition to any others required by departmental programs or specialty tracks):

Required (Core) Courses: 8 credits

Department/College Weekly Seminar | VME 6937L VMS Graduate Seminar Series—or equivalent* (1 credit);

Statistics | STA 6166 Statistical Methods in Research—or equivalent* (3 credits);

Biochemistry/Molecular Biology | BCH 5413 Mamm Mol Biol & Genetics; BCH 6415 Advanced Molecular & Cell Biology—or equivalent* (3 credits).

Starting Fall 2022, all new CVM MSc students must receive education and training in **Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit)**. MS VMS In-Residence students can take VME 6767 Issues in Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit), GMS 7877 Responsible

Conduct in Biomedical Research (1 credit), PHC 7427 Ethics in Population Science (2 credits). Other RCR courses approved by CVM Graduate Studies Committee can apply.

MS VMS Distance Education (thesis) students can take Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) online RCR training <https://research.ufl.edu/rcr/rcr-training/citi-rcr-training/> (approved by UF HSC).

*Equivalent courses must be approved by the student supervisory committee, the Department Graduate Coordinator, and the Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies, except equivalent courses for Responsible Conduct for Research, which must also be approved by the CVM Graduate Studies Committee.

D. DELIVERY PLATFORMS

[a] The MS in VMS is approved as an in-residence (on campus) graduate program. The program requires 76%-100% delivery of education and training activities on campus (face-to-face instruction). That is, at least 22 credits must be completed on campus (face-to-face instruction) (includes VME 6937L VMS Graduate Seminar Series and VME 6767 Responsible Conduct Research); eight or more credits can be completed online and/or remote with written request, justification, and approval by faculty mentor and CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

[b] The MS in VMS offers three concentrations in shelter medicine, veterinary forensic sciences, and forensic toxicology, which are approved as Distance Education (online) programs.

E. SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

There are many sources of academic and logistical information available to you. Academically, you should work closely with your Major Professor and the other members of your Supervisory Committee. Your Supervisory Committee must be formed early in your graduate program (end of first semester), for it is the function of this Committee to guide all facets of your graduate program.

In addition to your Supervisory Committee, you can reach out to your Department Graduate Coordinator, Department Chair, or CVM's Director for Graduate Education for guidance and assistance.

F. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

While there are many sources of assistance and information available to you, **the final responsibility for ensuring that you meet all degree requirements in a timely**

manner rests with you. As mentioned above, degree requirements fall into two broad categories: those specified by the Graduate School and those specified by the CVM. It is your responsibility to make sure that both sets of requirements are met.

Degree requirements are intentionally flexible to allow you and your Supervisory Committee to design a program that best meets your needs. However, in some instances, deviation from stated policy on degree requirements may be warranted. **All deviations from stated degree requirements must be approved by the Supervisory Committee, the Department Graduate Coordinator, the Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies, and possibly the Graduate School.**

In addition to meeting stated degree requirements, **it is imperative that all graduate students conduct themselves with integrity.** Any hint of potential fraud, plagiarism, cheating, abuses of confidentiality or conflicts of interest is to be avoided and will not be tolerated.

Our goal is to provide you with a quality graduate education that will meet both your short-term academic objectives, and will also help provide you with the foundation to understand and address the variety of issues and opportunities that you will face as a professional in a changing, evolving society and world.

G. GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

In addition to the formal Graduate Assistants United on campus, there is another graduate student association called the UF Graduate Student Council. For information contact their office in room 324, Reitz Union, 392-7000. In addition, the College of Veterinary Medicine is proud of our own graduate student organization, the VGSA (Veterinary Graduate Student Association.) Information on this group may be found online at: <https://research.vetmed.ufl.edu/studies/vgsa/>

H. INTERRUPTION OF GRADUATE STUDY AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

If a student plans to not register for one semester, the student should ask permission (in writing) from his or her Major Professor and then contact the Registrar so as to be assigned an appointment for registration for the next term. A student who does not register for more than three consecutive semesters will have to reapply for admission in order to be reactivated.

II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND FINANCIAL AID

A. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MS PROGRAM IN THE CVM

All of the following requirements must be met in order to qualify for admission into the MS program in the CVM:

1. An earned Bachelor's degree or equivalent
2. An upper division undergraduate GPA of 3.2 or the equivalent
3. Three appropriate letters of recommendation
4. A GRE score is *NOT* required
5. Availability of space, resources and faculty expertise

For International graduate applicants, there are three exemptions for the IELTS/TOEFL requirement:

1. Citizenship in one of the Anglophone countries listed under the “Countries Exempt from English Proficiency” drop-down tab on this Office of Admissions webpage: <https://admissions.ufl.edu/apply/graduate/international>.
2. Official transcripts showing at least one year of full-time enrollment in academic courses — not English as a Second Language (ESL) courses — at a US higher education institution.
3. A UF ELI exit certificate earned by completing the UF English Language Institute program.

Outside of those exceptions, non-US applicants are expected to submit IELTS or TOEFL scores that meet the required minima (6.0 IELTS, 80 Internet TOEFL, and 550 Paper TOEFL).

The result of the test will determine whether it is necessary for the student to enroll in the Scholarly Writing Course. Scholarly Writing (formerly EAP 5845 and EAP 5846). The course is offered as a non-credit course lasting six weeks. This course is not eligible for a tuition waiver; This course does not count toward a graduate degree.

There are two types of admission to the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. The first type of admission is called **direct admission**. A student may be granted direct admission when he/she satisfies both the graduate school and departmental minimum admission requirements and who has demonstrated in his/her previous coursework, a sufficient background and ability to successfully pursue graduate study.

Students who are not eligible for direct admission may be granted **conditional admission as approved by the UF Graduate School**. Conditional admission may be used for those students who do not satisfy the minimum GPA or test score requirement or for those students whose GPA or TOEFL scores are on the borderline of acceptability, or because specific prerequisite courses are required. In these cases, the prospective Major Professor submits a written petition to the CVM Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies

through the Departmental Graduate Coordinator for consideration by the UF Graduate College. Students admitted conditionally are automatically "on probation" for the given time period defined in the conditions. Students granted conditional admission will be notified of the conditions under which they have been admitted. If the conditions under which a student has been admitted are not satisfied in the time frame given, that student will not be eligible to register further.

B. ASSISTANTSHIPS AND OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. ASSISTANTSHIPS

- a. Availability - A limited number of teaching and research assistantships are available for graduate study. Normally, applications are considered in the Spring for appointment beginning the following July or August, but assistantships may become available at other times. Selection is based on CVM program needs, student qualifications (e.g., GPA, letters of recommendation), and available space and faculty time. Assistantships are funded from 1) state and federal money provided to the CVM to support the teaching and research programs of the college, and 2) grants and contracts administered by CVM faculty members. More information on assistantships is available from the Office for Research & Graduate Studies.

- b. Tuition Payments - The College of Veterinary Medicine receives a limited number of tuition payments for Florida and non-Florida residents. These tuition payments are a benefit offered to those graduate students who will be employed as Graduate Assistants and who meet certain criteria. These include: 1) the student must be currently admitted to a Graduate Program 2) the student must have a GPA of 3.0 or above 3) the student must be employed as a Graduate Assistant for a minimum of 0.5 FTE. 4) the student must be employed from the first day of classes through the last day of final exams for any individual semester. 5) the student must be registered for the correct number of hours required for the appointment as determined by the FTE. University of Florida graduate assistants are represented by Graduate Assistants United, the union representing all graduate students on all campuses in the State of Florida.

Tuition payments are processed "on-line" throughout the semester. It is the responsibility of the student to verify that their Letter of Appointment has been entered into the computer by their employing department prior to fee payment deadline. Tuition payments only apply to the minimum hours required for the appointment. Please be sure that the appointment dates on the Letter of Appointment cover the whole semester. Also, be sure that you are registered correctly for your appointment and have no flags on your record. If the Letter of Appointment is not entered into the computer by fee payment deadline the student

will be assessed a \$100 late payment fee.

- c. Responsibilities - Each credit hour is comprised of two parts; a matriculation fee and various service fees. The tuition payment pays the matriculation portion of each credit hour of the appointment up to minimum as determined by the FTE. **The service fees for each credit hour are never paid by the tuition payment and must be paid by the student. Please note that if a student's fees are not paid in full by the deferred payment deadline that he/she will be assessed a \$100.00 late payment fee** by the University Bursar's Office. The student may also be assessed a late payment fee if the initial tuition payment is processed after the regular tuition payment processing period. **Any hours that the student registers for over the minimum required for the appointment must be paid for in full (matriculation and service fees) by the student.**

Students holding graduate assistantships do not accrue vacation time. Graduate assistants are considered UF employees and follow the work/vacation schedule of other UF employees. Arrangements must be made with the Major Professor before leaving campus for an extended period of time. Each graduate assistant may take up to 5 days of sick leave each semester. Graduate Assistants may become members of Graduate Assistants United.

Obligations of both the student and the faculty supervisor are described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement Booklet. A copy may be found online: <https://www.ufgau.org/cba.html> or at the Office of the Graduate Assistants United at Yon Hall 224.

Registration for graduate courses at the CVM is online on UF's web site for student functions, <https://one.uf.edu/> during regularly scheduled periods of advance registration and regular registration. Online registration may also be completed at the Office of Research & Graduate Studies. Please note it is a CVM rule that you must bring your completed Graduate Course Listing Form signed by both their Major Professor and their Graduate Coordinator to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies regardless of which system with which you register. **Please note that if a student has not registered for anything by the end of regular registration that he/she may be assessed a \$100.00 late registration charge by the Bursar's Office.** Drop/Add procedures are also online for any regular drop/add periods. Students will be held fee liable for any courses that are dropped or added after the deadline even if the drop/add is for the same number of credits.

- d. International travel – Graduate Assistants who plan to travel abroad must review and comply with UF travel policies and directives

<https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/travel>. In addition, Graduate Assistants with Teaching Assistant obligations must request approval from the CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies before travel plans are initiated.

2. Fellowships

Several fellowships are available to graduate students. A listing of multiple funding opportunities for graduate students may be found at:

http://www.research.ufl.edu/research-program-development/research_program_development_docs/Funding_Opportunities_for_Graduate_Students.pdf

3. Other Financial Aid

The CVM offers additional funding other than assistantships. At the annual CVM Phi Zeta and Research Celebration Event, the CVM recognizes several graduate students upon recommendations of an ad hoc committee of graduate faculty.

These include the Charles F. Simpson Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000), the CVM Excellence in Doctoral Studies Award (\$750), the CVM Excellence in Masters Studies Award (\$750), the CVM Excellence in Clinical Science Research Award (\$750), and the CVM Excellence in Basic Science Research Award (\$750).

Graduate Students may also be recognized for their research presentations for the “Best in Show” competition awarding cash prizes for the best research presentations.

III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - MASTER'S OF SCIENCE

General Information

In order to obtain a MS degree, you must complete several types of requirements: 1) coursework requirements, 2) examinations, and 3) completion of a MS thesis. These requirements are detailed below, and the MS is awarded only after satisfactory completion of all of these requirements.

A. COURSEWORK

1. Minimum Degree Credit Hours - A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for the MS degree. At least half the required credits, exclusive of Master's Research VME 6971, must be in the field of study designated major. Thus, 12 credits in the major are required. These include all courses with the VME prefix and the additional courses as noted in the Graduate Catalog for Veterinary Medical Sciences that may be accepted for graduate credit as part of a candidate's major. A student will not be allowed to graduate taking only pass-fail courses. Students are required to enroll in courses in the major that are letter graded. Information on registration may be found at: <https://handbook.ufl.edu/students/registering/> Registration may be accomplished at: <https://one.ufl.edu/>

A maximum of 6 credits of Masters' Thesis (VME 6971) may be counted towards the minimum of 30 Degree Credits, although more than this may be accumulated by the student. Three hours out of the six must be taken during a student's final term of enrollment.

2. Transfer of Credit - Only graduate-level (5000-7999) work with a grade of B or better, is eligible for transfer of credit. A maximum of 15 transfer credits are allowed. These can include no more than 9 credits from institution/s approved by UF, with the balance obtained from postbaccalaureate work at the University of Florida. Credits transferred from other universities are applied toward the degree requirements, but grades earned are not computed in the student's grade point average. Acceptance of transfer of credit requires approval of the student's supervisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate School.

*Transfer of credit courses must be approved by the student's Supervisory Committee, the Departmental Graduate Coordinator, the CVM Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Official transcripts from all relevant universities must be submitted for

this request.

3. Unsatisfactory Performance in Coursework - Students who do not maintain a 3.0 average in all work will be subject to exclusion from further registration as a graduate student. For students on assistantships, the Graduate School automatically disallows assistantship appointment, and thus, tuition payments in the following semester when the cumulative GPA drops below 3.0. If you think that your cumulative GPA has fallen below 3.0, do not wait until registration for the next semester. You should consult with your Major Professor and the Graduate Coordinator. If you receive an Incomplete or an "I" grade you are allowed one term to make it up without penalty. After one term, an "I" grade counts as an "E" grade and will be counted in the calculation of your cumulative GPA.
- B. EXAMINATIONS** - A final oral examination is required. This exam is administered by the Supervisory Committee and evaluates the student's proficiency and general knowledge in the major field of study and evaluates the thesis and the student's comprehension thereof. This examination must be completed within 6 months of the date the degree is to be conferred. The results of the exam are reported to the Graduate School via the GIMS system.
- C. ATTENDANCE OF FINAL EXAMINATION** - The following two options are approved as per the UF Graduate Student Handbook:
- [a] In-person attendance of the student and the supervisory committee;
 - [b] In-person attendance of the student and the supervisory committee chair (or co-chair), with other committee members participating simultaneously, remotely at the same time via electronic media.
- D. THESIS** - An approved MS thesis is a requirement of the MS degree. The MS thesis reports on the results of the MS thesis research. Contact the Graduate School Editorial Office (Room 168 Grinter Hall) for details. The Supervisory Committee must approve the final version of the MS thesis in order for the MS degree to be awarded. For this reason, the student should make sure that the Supervisory Committee is kept abreast of research direction, progress and results, and that the members have a chance to review and make suggestions on early versions of the thesis. The Committee should complete the Graduate Student Progress Report Form at each meeting. The completed form should be submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. When the thesis is ready to be put into final form, the student should refer to the Graduate School's web site for information on preparing a Thesis. Computer software to assist in preparation of the thesis according to Graduate School standard format is available from CIRCA (392-

2007). Please note that it is the student's responsibility to meet all submission deadlines as published each term on the Graduate School's web site: <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/>

The first and final submission of a student's thesis must be submitted electronically to the GIMS (Graduate Information Management System) web site.

The members of the Supervisory Committee must have an opportunity to review the thesis in advance of the exam so that they may advise the student of any needed revision before the final exam. A final copy should be made available to the members of the Supervisory Committee 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the final exam. The results of the final exam are reported via the Final Exam form which is input into the Student Information System online system by the deadline for the term. After a successful final exam, revisions which may be suggested by the Supervisory Committee are made and signatures obtained on the signature page of the revised thesis called the ETD (Electronic Thesis or Dissertation) Signature Page. The ETD Signature Page must be input into the GIMS system before the final submission deadline for the term. This final version must be submitted to the Graduate School for an editorial review.

- E.** APPLICATION FOR DEGREE - Students must apply for their degree online on <https://student.ufl.edu/> (Under My Online Services, My Record, Certificate/degree Application) each semester that they expect to graduate. Deadline dates for degree application may be found in that year's graduate catalog.
- F.** REGISTRATION DURING THE FINAL SEMESTER - Students must be registered for the minimum number of credits during the semester of the final examination and graduation unless all requirements for graduation have been met before the beginning of the semester. In general, this means registering for 3 credit hours of VME 6971 if Fall or Spring in the last semester or 2 credits of VME 6971 if Summer is the last semester.
* If a student has a Graduate Assistant appointment, they are required to fulfill the minimum registration requirement (9 credits Spring/Fall and 6 credits in Summer C) to maintain the terms of appointment.
- G.** TIME LIMITATIONS - All work and transferred credit must have been completed within the seven years immediately preceding the date on which the degree is awarded.
- H.** STUDENT CONDUCT - Students must conduct their graduate program in a manner of high ethical standards and integrity.
- I.** SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION - If at any time during your graduate program, you feel that you have been sexually harassed or discriminated against in any way, you should immediately contact your Graduate Advisor, Department Chair, Graduate Coordinator, or the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

IV. SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

General

- A. To be appointed as soon as possible and in general no later than the end of the first semester of equivalent full-time study.
- B. To inform the student of all regulations governing the degree sought. This does not absolve the student from becoming informed of these regulations.
- C. To meet immediately after appointment to review the background preparation and current progress of the student and to discuss and approve a program of study.
- D. To meet and discuss a thesis topic and to approve this topic and written plans for carrying out the research.
- E. To meet with the student at least twice a year and when the work on the thesis is at least one-half completed to review procedures, progress, expected results, and to make suggestions for the completion of the study.
- F. To give the student a yearly Academic Evaluation (See Appendix 12) to appraise academic progress.

Supervisory Committee for Master's Degree Committee must have at least three members:

- A chair - who must have graduate faculty status in the student's degree program's home unit.
- A co-chair or member - who must have graduate faculty status in the student's degree program's home unit.
- A member - who must have graduate faculty status in any UF unit.

Each graduate student has a Major Professor who has a graduate faculty appointment in the College of Veterinary Medicine who is the chairperson of The Supervisory Committee for the Master's Degree shall consist of no fewer than three members of the graduate faculty including the chair. The student should work closely with all members of the Supervisory Committee through all aspects of the program. The Supervisory Committee is recommended by the Major Professor, in consultation with the student, and is approved by the Department Chair, or departmental Graduate Coordinator, the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School. The student must notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies of the Supervisory Committee once its members are decided so that the Committee may be entered into the online GIMS (Graduate Information Management) system. **IT IS REQUIRED THAT A SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE MUST BE ENTERED INTO THE GIMS SYSTEM NO LATER THAN THE END OF THE 2ND TERM OF**

REGISTRATION. Supervisory Committees may be updated up until the halfway point of the final term of registration.

V. PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF COURSES

An academic evaluation is conducted by the Supervisory Committee following the first semester of enrollment for the purpose of program development. This evaluation results in a PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF COURSES which shall be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator and the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies for approval prior to the end of the first semester in which the Supervisory Committee is formed. If you are not a full-time student, you may be granted an extension.

VI. FINAL EXAMINATION

A final comprehensive examination is required for all graduate students and is administered by the Supervisory Committee. All committee members should be present. This oral examination includes but is not limited to the defense of the thesis. Just prior to the examination, the student presents a public seminar on the results of the thesis research.

Time Schedules:

Notice of the time and place of the final examination must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, the Graduate Coordinator, and all CVM Graduate Faculty, 10 working days prior to the examination. A copy of the thesis must be lodged with the department 14 days prior to the examination.

Notification of Results:

The results of the final examination should be made on the form "Report on Thesis or Dissertation and/or Final Examination" and the "Publishing Agreement" form. All members of the official supervisory committee are required to sign the Final Examination Report and the thesis (ETD) signature page. Submissions of both forms are completed online through the GIMS system by the staff member in the Office of Research & Graduate Studies by the deadline.
