



**AVECCC**  
ARIZONA VETERINARY  
EMERGENCY & CRITICAL CARE CENTER

# **Veterinary Student Externship Handbook**

## **2018-2019**

**87 W. Juniper Ave. Gilbert, Arizona 85233  
480.497.0222**

**Purpose of this handbook:**

This handbook has been prepared to familiarize your-self with the externship program and policies of our hospital. It should be noted, this is not a binding contract, and policies may be changed at any time.

**Program description:**

Arizona Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Center (AVECCC) (formerly Emergency Animal Clinic and BluePearl Veterinary Emergency) is offering clinical externships for veterinary students interested in pursuing experience in small animal emergency and critical care medicine.

As an extern, you will have the opportunity to utilize the information obtained in university and apply it while you work alongside a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care (DACVECC), experienced emergency clinicians, and/or current interns. The amount of hands on work will be determined by your attitude, skill set, and the mentoring doctor you will be working with. Please understand that each doctor has their own comfort level with patient care and working with student externs.

You are however, encouraged to be involved in cases and perform and interpret diagnostics alongside your mentoring veterinarian. If opportunity allows, you may be able to scrub in and assist with surgery and other procedures as deemed appropriate by the mentoring veterinarian. Some of our most common surgical emergencies include GDV's, dystocias, pyometras, foreign bodies (gastrotomy and enterotomy), hemoabomen/splenectomy, and bite wound explore/repair. Other common emergencies include blocked cats, diabetic ketoacidosis, pancreatitis, anemia, trauma, toxicities, toad toxicities, heat stroke, and rattlesnake envenomation.

We have extensive diagnostic and treatment capabilities including an in-house laboratory (CBC, biochemistry, blood gases, urinalysis, coagulation analyzer), basic and advanced monitoring equipment (direct/indirect arterial BP, ETCO2, CVP, ECG, pulse oximetry), mechanical ventilator (both anesthetic and long-term ventilator), defibrillator, digital radiography, ultrasound, echocardiography, CT, stereotactic radiation and endoscopy.

You are expected to ask pertinent questions and participate in the general activities of the hospital including record keeping, handling, blood draws, laboratory interpretation, differential lists, 'FAST' scans, physical exams on patients, etc.

Students who are most engaged in the program will gain the most.

**About our Hospital:**

Arizona Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Center (AVECCC) pet emergency team members are highly experienced pet emergency veterinarians and support staff. Our high standards of veterinary care are unsurpassed. Our pet emergency hospital is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year to serve any pet emergency in east valley greater Phoenix/Mesa area. Skillful and committed, our veterinarians treat their client pets with the same compassion and expertise that they would give to their own pets. We are proud to serve as an extension of their primary veterinarians when they are not available. When seconds count in a pet emergency, the specialized training of our emergency teams makes a difference.

Prior to AVECCC, BluePearl Veterinary Partners owned our veterinary hospital, and prior to that, was the Emergency Animal Clinic (EAC) for over 40 years. Although our name has changed, high quality medicine and compassionate pet care has always maintained our top priority.

AVECCC works within the building of Arizona Veterinary Specialists (AVS) which houses multiple veterinary specialties for the East Valley. AVS is an alliance of veterinary specialty doctors formed to provide ill and injured pets comprehensive, state-of-art patient care and exceptional client service. The board certified specialists offer latest technologies, equipment, facilities, and expertise within the fields of emergency and critical care, surgery, internal medicine, cardiology, radiology, dentistry, ophthalmology, and dermatology. We also work closely with two nearby veterinary neurology centers.

**Expectations:**

- Look and act professionally at all times. See below for dress code.
- Take notes throughout your day.
- Ask pertinent questions and engage with clinicians on cases
- Provide a base-line knowledge of pathophysiology, anatomy, pharmacology, etc.
- Take initiative! Be assertive! We can be very busy so sometimes you need to ask the doctor questions
- Talk to the nursing staff!! Veterinary technicians can offer some of the most valuable information
- Make a list of things you learned, or things you want to learn
- Be prepared to use and improve your skills through observation and/or physical practice
- Practice writing SOAPS, Discharges, Treatment sheets
- Practice giving patient rounds (presenting cases) to clinicians including specialists
- Evaluate blood work results, radiograph interpretation, client communication

**Daily/weekly schedule:**

1. Morning transfer rounds/ICU
  - a. Occur daily at 7am sharp. This allows for the transfer of hospitalized cases between overnight and daytime shifts.
  - b. Rounds include the interns as well as a critical care specialist and/or a ECC resident
2. Wednesday morning continuing education rounds
  - a. Didactic learning once a week
  - b. Generally 10am in the downstairs conference room – time can vary
3. Daytime outpatient ER – 7am to 5pm
  - a. You may be required to shadow the outpatient doctor
4. Mid/swing shift outpatient ER-2pm to 12am OR 4pm to 2am
  - a. You may be required to shadow the outpatient mid-shift doctors
  - b. These tend to be the most busy shifts
5. Overnight outpatient ER 8pm to 8am
  - a. You may be shadowing the outpatient or the inpatient doctors during this time pending caseload.
  - b. Overnights can be hit or miss in regards to case load, so be prepared to have reading material in the chance of a slow night.

**Tips:**

- Presenting a case
  - Start with signalment (Age, sex, breed)
  - Presenting complaint
    - Why is the pet here?
  - Brief concise history
  - Your physical exam
    - What did you find when you looked at the patient?
  - Diagnostics
    - Blood work, radiographs, FAST/AUS, other
  - Treatment plan
    - This may include a future plan as well

- Ask questions!
  - Ask questions pertinent to the cases at hand
  - Be prepared to answer questions in return
  - Have a good base-line knowledge to build from
  - Know where to find your answer – the doctor will not always tell you
- Don't be shy!
  - Ask to help, offer to do things
  - Perform physical exams on patients (unless patient is compromised or aggressive)
- Practice appropriate personal protection (PPE)
  - ALWAYS Wear exam gloves whenever touching patients and/or drugs
    - Do not handle controlled substances unless directly supervised or asked to do so
  - Change gloves between each patient
  - WASH HANDS between patients and before/after eating or using the restroom
  - Wear appropriate isolation gowns and masks when indicated
  - Follow strict ICU and Isolation protocols
    - If in question ASK!

**Dress code:**

- Clean scrubs of a solid color
- Clean white lab coat - unwrinkled
- Name badge with name and university (if possible)
- Shoes should be comfortable (expect to be on your feet a lot!)

\*We consider ourselves a very welcoming group of people and like to have a professional but relaxed environment. We are tolerant to tattoos and piercings assuming they are non-offensive/vulgar and do not pose risk to yourself, our patients, or fellow staff members.

**Parking & Safety**

Parking is available around the building. Please be mindful of spaces labeled “Clients Only” as these are intended for paying clients ONLY. If the parking lot appears full, you may park in the street north of the building (Olive Street). Additionally, staff and visitors are allowed to park in the funeral home south of Juniper. We just ask that you do NOT park on the EAST side of their building please.

When leaving the building at night please be sure to practice the buddy system. If you do not feel comfortable leaving, please let your mentoring doctor or technician supervisor on the shift that you are leaving, and we will find someone to escort you out.

\*\*Remember, if you ever feel uncomfortable for any reason during your stay with us, do not hesitate to contact the student externship coordinator (Megan Usiak-McBeth) or inform your mentoring veterinarian.

**Liability insurance:**

AVECCC (NVA) does provide limited liability insurance to our students (non-paid externs). We still strongly suggest each student to have his or her own individual student liability insurance.

**Housing**

Unfortunately, at this time, AVECCC does not offer housing to our externs or interns. It will be up to you to provide housing and transportation during your externship. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding location and are looking for suggestions.

**Contacts:**

- Externship Coordinator: Dr. Megan Usiak-McBeth
  - ([megan.usiak-mcbeth@azervets.com](mailto:megan.usiak-mcbeth@azervets.com))
- Internship Coordinator: Dr. Katherine Smith (DACVECC)
  - ([Katherine.smith@azervets.com](mailto:Katherine.smith@azervets.com))
- Clinic Manager: Dr. Gloriana Halterman
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