

Equine Studies Program Policies

Please read before signing

Health Provisions

Warning: Due to the inherently unpredictable behavior of animals, there is an element of assumed risk in all animal studies and/or interactions with animals. Under VT Law, an equine activity sponsor is not liable for any injury to, or death of, a participant in equine activities that are obvious and necessary, pursuant to 12 V.S.A § 1039. **The college assumes no liability for students enrolled in the Equine Studies Program who are engaged in activities required by the program, and each student (and parent, if the student is under age 18) is required to sign a “Waiver of Liability” before the student can participate in any program courses requiring contact with horses.**

All students enrolled in the Equine Studies Program **must** provide the Program Director with proof of having received a Tetanus booster within five years of entering the program. Because it is necessary for all Equine Studies students to be current (within 5 years) with their Tetanus vaccinations, the college recommends that students receive a booster in the year before entering the program. **No student will be allowed to participate in classes until the appropriate documentation has been received by Jessica Stewart Riley, Program Director.**

Because the Equine Studies Program is physically demanding and requires some lifting (approximately 50lbs. at a time), agility, and the ability to safely handle horses, students should be in good physical condition. Students who are unable to exert themselves might have difficulty satisfying the program requirements. (For more detailed information, please consult the Essential Functions for the Equine Studies Program.)

As a part of the freshman Stable Management, Equitation, Equine Training, Riding Instruction, and Senior Seminar courses, students are required to participate in and be responsible for the daily maintenance and management of the school horses and the Center.

Since animal science programs, including Equine Studies, include the possibility of exposure to infection or injury, x-ray equipment, anesthesia or other medications, and chemical-based products used in animal care, any student with a medical condition that would make such exposure hazardous to his/her health must inform the Program Director and the course instructor of the medical risk and provide documentation by a physician. The Director and the instructor will determine whether the condition will unduly limit the student's ability to perform necessary work in the course.

A fundamental safety requirement for working around horses or in the Equine Center is that students be appropriately and professional equipped. Further, given some horses' sensitivity to chemical odors, students **should not wear perfumes or strongly scented products of any kind.**

Boarding a Horse at the Equine Center

The Vermont Technical College Equine Center has a limited number of stalls available for students interested in boarding a horse. They must fill out a boarding application and be approved by the Stable Manager and Program Director in order to board in the student-run college facility. The application was created for safety reasons, as there are a large number of people working in the barn with different ability levels, and each horse is handled by each student at one time or another. Students boarding horses in the Center must properly care for their horse, pay the board fee on time, and abide by the Boarding Contract, as well as by the rules and regulations of Rough Terrain Farm, the Equine Center, and the Equine Studies Program. (For information about the Boarding Application, Contract, and board costs, please contact the Stable Manager, Natalie Jarnis, at Natalie.Jarnis@vtc.edu.)

Any student boarding his/her horse at the Center must maintain a semester GPA above the probation level for that student's total credits earned. If the student is placed on probation, boarding privileges may be revoked. The final determination in this situation will be made by the Program Director, in consultation with the student's advisor.

All horses being boarded in the Equine center are subject to re-evaluation at any time due to: violation of any term of the Boarding Contract or of the rules and regulations of Rough Terrain Farm, the Equine Center, or the Equine Program or the student's liability or unwillingness to properly care for the horse.

Weight Guidelines for the Equitation Classes

Any student whose weight could endanger the average school horse's soundness must ride a suitable weight-carrying horse. If the college does not have such a horse in its program, then the student must provide and board a suitable horse for those semesters when the student will be enrolled in Equitation classes, Riding Instruction classes and Training classes.

Please Note:

- The weight limit is determined by many factors beyond the numerical weight, but a generally accepted industry standard is that a horse can carry approximately 20% of his or her body weight, including the saddle. However, the student's manner of riding, posture, musculature, ability, and physical condition also influence the weight-bearing load placed upon the school horse. If you believe that you might be affected by the safe weight limit, please contact Jessica Stewart Riley, the Program Director, at Jessica.Stewart@vtc.edu or 802-728-1397 to discuss your particular situation.
- The weight limit is not designed to restrict anyone from participating in the Equine Studies Program or in the Equitation, Training or Riding Instruction classes; rather, it is necessary to ensure the safety of all equitation students, fair access to a variety of school horses for all students, and the health, safety, and soundness of the school horses.
- Final decisions about the weight limit will be made by the Program Director, in consultation with the Equine Center Manager and appropriate riding instructors. All information used in the deliberations is confidential.

- A student supplying and boarding an appropriate horse is subject to all of the conditions listed under Boarding a Horse at the Equine Center.

Student Injuries and Illness

If a student is unable to ride in an Equitation class and/or to complete required barn work due to physical injury or illness for more than two sessions, then he/she must contact the Program Director to explain the situation. Before returning to riding and/or barn work, the student must supply the Program Director with a note from a physician permitting the student to participate in riding and/or barn work. If a student is unable to perform all activities related to riding and/or barn work, then the physician must specify which activities the student can and cannot perform, as well as the expected timeframe for the limited activity. If the limitation persists for more than three class weeks, then the student may be required to drop the Equitation class, with the withdrawal being conducted for medical reasons. The final decision about such withdrawals will be made by the Program Director, in consultation with the Equine Center Manager and appropriate riding instructors.

Transportation to and from the Equine Center

The Vermont Technical College Equine Center is located at Rough Terrain Farm, approximately six miles from the main campus. The college is not responsible for providing transportation either to or from the Equine Center. Students in the Equine Studies Program must arrange for reliable transportation to and from the Center on weekdays, weeknights, and weekends as necessary to meet the program's attendance and work requirements.

Additional Notes

- Accident/health insurance coverage is required for all students, who must either provide proof of coverage or purchase a policy through the college.
- Students enrolled in courses requiring a lab at the Equine Center will be assessed an additional Facility Lab Fee. (See course descriptions to determine which courses require this fee.)
- The fee for each Equitation class is \$500 for the academic year and covers the cost of weekly small group instruction. (**Price subject to change each academic year**)
- Students are responsible for meals at off-campus sites and when on field trips, if necessary.
- Students may participate in workshops or clinics provided at Rough Terrain Farm, but they are responsible for any additional fees or costs associated with those workshops/clinics. Those events sponsored by the college will be free for Equine Studies students.
- All students in the Equine Studies Program **must** have appropriate riding gear, including an ASTM-approved riding helmet, breeches/jodhpurs/tights, chaps (optional), riding boots/paddock boots, appropriate shirts, sweaters/sweatshirts, and/or jackets, and fleece helmet covers and winter riding gloves for winter riding. In addition, students working in the Center must wear sturdy shoes or boots and clothing that does not inhibit physical labor. **Students must be appropriately dressed for the weather and for safety, both while riding and while working in the Equine Center.**

- In any course noted as having a P/NP grading status, a Pass will equal an average of 70 or above or average performance of class activities, while No Pass will equal an average below 70 or below-average performance of class activities.

I have read the Vermont Technical College Equine Studies Policies explained above and understand them. I have asked questions of the Program Director regarding any concerns I may have in adhering to them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____