To: All Incoming Veterinary Technology Students

From: Mary O’Horo Loomis, DVM
Veterinary Science Program Director

Date: February 10, 2015
Re: Mandatory Rabies Vaccination Policy

Welcome to the Veterinary Science Technology Programs at SUNY Canton. We look forward to meeting you and working with you to achieve your academic goals.

We have recently worked with our Advisory Board to establish a policy whereby all Veterinary Technology students must be vaccinated against the rabies virus before they perform the first of their two mandatory 12 hour preceptorships and prior to taking courses in Anesthesia, Radiology, or Small Animal Medicine. We feel that the most appropriate time for students to complete the series is during their second semester in the program for students in both the AAS (2 year) and BS (4 year) programs.

We feel that requiring all students to be vaccinated against rabies is essential for several reasons. Rabies is a serious viral disease, there is close to a 100% mortality rate in people or animals that contract this disease. In many cases, Veterinary Technology students may come in contact with animals that may not have been vaccinated against rabies or that have unknown vaccination histories. This is often true in the case of animals from shelters. Many veterinary practices that allow students to perform their preceptorships with them require that students be vaccinated.

The rabies vaccination consists of a three shot series given during a three week time span. The SUNY Canton Davis Health Center will order and administer these vaccines to you for only the cost of the vaccine, if you would like. This vaccine series (all 3 shots) will cost approximately $750, depending on the current price for the vaccine. We have arranged to have this cost added to your student bill for the spring semester so that it can be covered by financial aid if you are eligible. Please note the student insurance plan, like many others, will not cover this vaccine series.

You have other options to obtain the vaccination series but it will require some advance planning to determine what works best for you. If you are currently covered by health insurance you may want to look into whether your current insurance will cover the rabies vaccination. You may be able to complete the series through your own health care provider or your local county health department. If you have already received the series or if you will be receiving them from a private provider, our health office will require proof of the completed vaccine series prior to May 1 of your second semester in the program. This information must include product type, route of administration, dose, and dates of the series.

Failure to complete the vaccine series by May 1 of the second semester, prior to your preceptorship, may result in you being dropped from the program.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by email at loomism@canton.edu