

Veterinary Extern Program-SCWDS

The Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) is a special unit within the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Georgia. SCWDS welcomes participation from junior or senior veterinary students from all accredited veterinary colleges in the form of an externship program.

Eligibility for the Externship: Within the limitations of SCWDS personnel time and space availability, any third- or fourth-year student in good academic standing from an accredited college of veterinary medicine is eligible for the externship. At present, SCWDS cannot accommodate more than 2 persons simultaneously; therefore, students with the best qualifications, as demonstrated by resume and academic standing, will be chosen for a given time period.

How to Apply: Students should apply by sending: 1) a 1-page letter of intent to Dr. Sonia Hernandez at shernandez@warnell.uga.edu, 2) a general resume, 3) the time period(s) preferred for the externship and 4) a letter sent from the academic dean at his/her college indicating approval of the externship.

Length of Externship: The length of externship is flexible but must be at least 3 weeks and should not exceed 12 weeks.

Enrollment in the Externship Program: Once an invitation for an externship is extended, the student must make arrangements to be enrolled in an appropriate fashion in his/her college. Students cannot participate in the SCWDS externship program during their between-term break or "free time" without special permission of Dr. Hernandez. A faculty member from the veterinary college of origin should be designated as responsible for the conduct of the extern. Each participant should have his/her own health insurance.

Housing and Financial Assistance: Housing and other living costs are not provided for externs during their stay in Athens, Georgia. If work assignments are made at other locations, the extern's travel costs for housing, transportation, and food will be reimbursed as it is for other SCWDS personnel. Ms. Jenny Pate is a good person to contact concerning housing in Athens.

Externship programs should be arranged at least 3 months in advance of the starting date.

Purpose/Objectives of the Externship: The primary purpose of the externship is to expose the veterinary student to the many aspects of wildlife population medicine. Major health objectives are to acquaint the veterinary student with (1) the role of veterinarians in the maintenance of healthy wildlife populations, (2) the interaction of wildlife management and wildlife health, and (3) examples of major diseases of free-ranging wildlife. Treatment of individual wild animals for those illnesses or injuries is NOT an aspect of this externship.

Externship Activities: The extern's activities will be greatly dependent upon work in progress at SCWDS during the time period. An effort will be made to expose the student to a broad variety of experiences. Students will participate in wildlife mortality investigations and ongoing wildlife disease research. When field trips are available, participation will be required. The student will be expected to respond to questions pertaining to assigned readings, lectures, and field experiences. Informal lectures and review of gross lesions of wildlife diseases are presented as time permits. The externship program is a team teaching effort, and the extern will be assigned to various staff members during the program.

Evaluation of the Extern: Formal tests will not be given. Dr. Hernandez, in consultation with other SCWDS staff members, will evaluate the extern in the format provided by the veterinary college of origin. Strong consideration will be given to work participation, demonstration of academic capability, and on the ability of the student to project a professional image.