

# Syllabus and Course Description

## Course Information

AVS 397 Equine Internship

Work Experience at the J.F. Witter Teaching and Research Center. Students work in teams to manage the University equine herd, including feeding, nutrition, health management, retraining of donated horses.

1-4 Credits

**Prerequisites:** AVS 303

### **Faculty Information:**

**Name:** Robert Causey

**Phone:** (207) 922-7475 (cell)

**E-Mail:** rcausey@maine.edu

**Meetings:** By appointment

### **Equine Trainer:**

**Name:** Cassie Astle

**Phone:** (207) 610-9483 (cell)

**E-Mail:** wilddivyfarm@gmail.com

**Meetings:** By appointment

## **Instructional Materials and Methods:**

No textbook is required. Main emphasis is on hands-on training at the farm, independent study and group discussion. An online barn manual may be accessed on google drive (Shared with Everyone in Barn > Barn Manual)

or under barn manual link at [robertcausey.github.io](http://robertcausey.github.io)

**Course Goals:** Students should develop the management skills to solve problems, guide less experienced co-workers, build consensus and resolve conflict in a technically and physically demanding work setting involving horses. Students will also expand knowledge in an area of equine science.

## **Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to oversee a team of less experienced peers in successful completion of specific, detailed, routine, tasks.
2. Students will be able to apply a problem-based approach in self-directed learning, facility management, and scientific study.
3. Students will increase their understanding of equine infectious diseases and apply it to management of horses.
4. Students will strengthen skills in consensus building, interpersonal communication, team-work and responsibility.
5. Students will strengthen proficiency in specific techniques related to equine management and science.

## Instructional Methods:

### 1. Students will have responsibility for leading a team of less experienced students in routine care of the UMaine horse herd.

Students in AVS 397 represent experienced members of the horse barn. Having already attended for at least one, perhaps two semesters, you will be responsible for providing friendly and positive direction to students in AVS 303 and AVS 196, making sure chores are completed, recorded, and absences documented. You will need to make sure everyone knows each other by name on a chore, and make sure everyone on a chore feels welcome and useful. Remember that everyone needs to sign in on a chore. You may have to perform less glamorous tasks to give others a learning opportunity, or take on more tasks if necessary. You may call Dr Causey anytime if a problem occurs on a chore, and if you are not clear on what needs to be done in a particular situation.

With variable credits, the following is a guide to how many chores you should be doing.

Credits	Chores/week	Total for semester		
		Mornings	Noon	Bring In
1 cr	2	5	3	5
2 cr	3	10	5	10
3 cr	4	15	7	15
4 cr	4	20	10	20

Attendance at barn meetings and completion of the horse chore requirement is essential to model good practice for students in AVS 303 and 196. Regular meetings are necessary to coordinate management of the horse herd, solve problems and resolve conflicts. People may catch up during spring break, finals week and summer if they are having trouble making requirements during the semester. Anyone with permanent scheduling difficulties due to class or work may make arrangements to permanently schedule specific AM and PM chore schedules throughout the semester. Remember that signing in the chore book is necessary. Enrollment in the class implies agreement by the student to meet these requirements.

### *Tallying chores*

Chores for which you sign up will be tallied as follows:

Completed on time: 1 point

Complete or covered for someone else: 1 point

Not completed, but covered by another student and excused: 0 points

Not completed, and no arrangement made for coverage and no excuse – 1 point

These added together = Total Chore Tally

Chore tally calculation of Total Equine Dependability Index (TEDI) = Total Chore Tally/Total Signed Up

e.g.. You sign up for 30 chores, complete 25, miss 1 excused, miss 4 unexcused

$$\text{TEDI} = (25 + 0 - 4)/30 = 21/30 = 0.7$$

Missed chores: You are essential members of the farm, and attendance at chores for which you have signed up is necessary for safety of your fellow students and welfare of the horses. *Missing a chore is grounds for reducing your letter grade.* Only serious conditions out of your control can be a basis for excusing a missed chore. These include a medical emergency, flu, fire at home, family emergency, weddings, funerals, cancelled airline flights, car accident, dangerous driving conditions and severe weather. Situations within your control should not be considered excusable. These include conflicting

work schedules, car trouble unrelated to weather, social events, studying for an exam, forgetfulness or trouble with your alarm clock. Students who miss chores repeatedly may be withdrawn from the class.

**Tallying Stalls:** A similar index for Stalls (STEDI) is computed in the same way. Your TEDI (and STEDI) give a picture of your dependability which is very important in this type of work setting. You are expected to do 2 stalls per credit hour per week.

**Senior Interns:** Interns with TEDI's in excess of 0.95, who consistently exceed total chore requirements and model good practice in the barn are eligible for consideration as Senior Interns. This means better letters of recommendation, greater levels of responsibility etc, but (unfortunately) perhaps more work overall, the usual reward for doing your job well.

**2. Students will attend a series of lectures on equine infectious diseases and take two on-line take home examinations based on distributed materials and lecture content.**

**3. Under supervision of Cassie Astle, students may also improve training of UMaine horses, and augment their own horse-training skills.**

#### **Training sessions (lab sections):**

This class is not intended to be a riding class, but re-training of the horse will in many cases lead to mounted activity during training sessions (lab sections). Students may choose not to ride, focusing instead on ground work, horse care and projects. Students should discuss the decision to ride or not ride with Dr. Causey at the beginning of the semester. Having made a choice previously, students can reverse a previous decision at the start of a new semester. Attendance at training sessions involving ground handling is mandatory for all students, whether they choose to ride or not. Riding may be restricted based on the student's ability, horse's level of training, safety concerns, lameness etc.

Horses are large animals and can be dangerous. The goal of training is to make a horse safe to work around. Although other horse facilities may have different ways to address this concern, for consistency it is necessary that all our students be trained to handle our horses in a specific way. Consequently, in this class you may be instructed in a method of handling which perhaps differs from what you have experienced previously. Ours is not the only way to train horses, but as a student in this class, please recognize that you will be learning and applying our method. Some times it may be necessary for our trainer to take control of a horse that is misbehaving in order to correct it. If you have any questions about the rationale behind the training methods please ask Cassie Astle. Questions about training methods are encouraged, and will not adversely affect your grade. However, animals must always be handled in the way Cassie Astle instructs.

#### **Assessment, Grading and Course Expectations:**

Attendance and chore requirement -33.3 %.

Lectures and Exams - 33.3 %

Training sessions - 33.3 %. Attendance and willingness to complete tasks covered.

Problems: If you are having any problems or concerns with the class please contact either Dr Causey or Cassie Astle. Your concerns will be kept confidential and expressing them will not adversely affect your grade.

**Policy statements required for every syllabus at the University of Maine:**

*Academic honesty (plagiarism, etc):* Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism and all forms of misrepresentation in academic work, and is unacceptable at The University of Maine. As stated in the University of Maine’s online undergraduate “Student Handbook,” plagiarism (the submission of another’s work without appropriate attribution) and cheating are violations of The University of Maine Student Conduct Code. An instructor who has probable cause or reason to believe a student has cheated may act upon such evidence, and should report the case to the supervising faculty member or the Department Chair for appropriate action.

*Students with disabilities statement:* If you have a disability for which you may be requesting accommodation, please contact Ann Smith, Director of Disabilities Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term.

*Sexual Discrimination Reporting:* The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination involving members of the campus, your teacher is required to report this information to the campus Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For confidential resources on campus: Counseling Center: 207-581-1392 or Cutler Health Center: at 207-581-4000.

For confidential resources off campus: Rape Response Services: 1-800-310-0000 or Spruce Run: 1-800-863-9909.

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

For support services on campus: Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention: 207-581-1406, Office of Community Standards: 207-581-1409, University of Maine Police: 207-581-4040 or 911. Or see the OSVP website for a complete list of services at <http://www.umaine.edu/osavp/>