Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

Program: (AD) Veterinary Technology Program (725)

Department of Veterinary Technology

School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)

College of Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

College of Arts and Sciences Mission: The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Mission: The School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) at Northwestern State University serves to create a collaborative environment for natural and applied science education that inspires students and faculty to engage in an interdisciplinary approach to developing strong analytical skills in interpersonal communication, critical and creative thinking, research, and data literacy as they become lifelong learners who are prepared for an ever-changing, global STEM community.

Veterinary Technology Program Mission: The mission of the Northwestern State University of Louisiana Veterinary Technology Program is to prepare graduates who, as veterinary technicians or technologists, are clinically competent and who demonstrate:

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- Excellent and compassionate patient care and services
- Excellent technical skills
- Professionalism and high ethical standards
- Promotion of public health
- Commitment to lifelong learning

Purpose: The associate degree (AD) program in Veterinary Technology will prepare graduates to become *veterinary technicians* working in academia, animal research facilities, zoological parks, private industry, animal specialty veterinary practices, and general veterinary practices. Some graduates may further their education in attaining the bachelor's degree in Biology with the Veterinary Technology concentration, becoming veterinary technologists, and/or attending professional veterinary schools to become veterinarians. The program's goal is to produce graduates who possess entry-level technical skills and a knowledge base in all areas of veterinary medicine.

Methodology: The assessment process for the AD in Veterinary Technology program is as follows:

1) Data from assessment tools (direct and indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and returned to the program director.
2) The program director analyzes the data to determine if students met measurable outcomes.
3) Results from the assessment are discussed with the program faculty and technical staff.
4) Individual meetings are held with faculty/staff teaching core veterinary technology courses as required.
5) The program director, in consultation with the Veterinary Technology Program Advisory Committee, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes. Substantive changes will be reported to the American Veterinary Medical Association Committee on Veterinary Technology Education and Activities (AVMA-CVTEA), the program's accrediting agency, within 30 days.

Northwestern State University's Veterinary Technology Program continues to be fully accredited by the AVMA-CVTEA pending favorable review of follow-up reporting until its next site visit in Jan 2027.

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Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Students completing the first-year sequence of courses in Veterinary Technology will demonstrate the required didactic knowledge base and will demonstrate required "hands-on" technical skills application which will be documented for each student.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives/outline.

VTEC 1030/1031: Introductory Veterinary Technology II Lecture/Laboratory (61 skills)

Measure 1.1. (Direct – _Knowledge): Students enrolled in VTEC 1030 will demonstrate proficiency in accrediting-agency (AVMA-CVTEA) required didactic skills/knowledge base following standard criteria for evaluating essential skills (document following). Eighty-five percent (85%) of students completing the course will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding by averaging 70% or higher scores on the examinations.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met with 82% of students achieving an average examination score of 70% or higher. Faculty determined that completion of reading assignments, required service hours, and supplemental support opportunities contributed to substantial improvement from the previous year's 52% achievement rate.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty implemented several changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Attendance was increased as a larger component of the overall course grade to emphasize the importance of classroom participation and engagement. A new attendance tracker visible to students was utilized to encourage accountability and improve attendance. Reading assignments were added directly to the course calendar and displayed on the Moodle dashboard to increase visibility and improve completion rates. Weekly reminders regarding assigned readings were provided. FLAME sessions and faculty office hours continued to be offered, and students were encouraged to complete service hours to gain additional animal handling and husbandry experience.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was not met. Eighty percent (80% or 36/45) of students achieved an average examination score of 70% or higher. While this represented a slight decrease compared to AC 2024-2025 (82%), performance remained substantially improved compared to AC 2023-2024 (52%). Faculty observed improved compliance with reading assignments due to increased visibility within Moodle and noted stronger attendance patterns throughout the semester. Additionally, retention from VTEC 1010 into VTEC 1030 improved compared to previous

years, indicating that students are progressing through the first-year sequence at a higher rate. Although the target was narrowly missed, the results suggest that the implemented interventions positively impact student success and retention.

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Scoring 70% avg. or higher on exams	Percent Students Meeting Measure
2023-2024	VTEC 1030	23	12	52%
2024-2025	VTEC 1030	33	27	82%
2025-2026	VTEC1030	45	36	80%

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2025–2026 results, the faculty will implement additional structured academic support measures in AC 2026–2027 to further improve student performance and promote earlier intervention for at-risk students. Faculty will introduce scheduled formative quizzes and cumulative review activities throughout the semester to reinforce foundational concepts before major examinations. These low-stakes assessments will provide students with more frequent feedback regarding their comprehension and identify deficiencies earlier in the course.

Faculty will further encourage peer collaboration through structured study groups and review sessions designed to improve critical thinking, study habits, and long-term retention of course material. These combined efforts are intended to improve student preparedness, increase examination performance, and help the program achieve the established benchmark in future assessment cycles.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – _Skill / Ability): Eighty-five percent (85%) of students completing VTEC 1031 will each demonstrate the ability to complete 61 required technical skills following standard criteria established for each skill (document following) and average 70% or higher scores on the course quizzes and examinations. A faculty veterinarian or credentialed veterinary technician will document completion of demonstration of each skill for each student successfully completing the laboratory course.

Finding. Target was met.

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Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met, with 96% of students successfully completing all required technical skills and achieving passing course grades. Faculty determined that review of previous laboratory material, low student-to-instructor ratios, and the use of anatomically correct teaching models contributed positively to student success.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty implemented weekly laboratory reviews, utilization of canine teaching models, and extensive hands-on laboratory instruction in AC 2025-2026. Students received repeated opportunities to practice essential skills prior to evaluation.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of students successfully completed all 61 required technical skills and achieved average scores of 70% or higher on course assessments. Although performance declined compared to the previous assessment cycle, the program exceeded the established benchmark of 85% demonstrating strong student competency in introductory technical skills.

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Performing All Documented Skills	Percent Students Meeting Measure
2023-2024	VTEC 1031	18	18	100%
2024-2025	VTEC 1031	28	27	96%
2025-2026	VTEC1031	24	21	88%

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2025–2026 results, faculty will implement supplemental laboratory instructional videos, weekly laboratory review discussions, and hands-on practice opportunities to reinforce technical skill competency in AC 2026–2027. Faculty will also expand opportunities for guided practice prior to graded skill assessments to improve student confidence and technical proficiency.

To further support students who may be academically at risk, faculty will implement additional early-semester skill check-ins to identify students needing remediation before major laboratory assessments. Students demonstrating difficulty with technical skills or quiz performance will be encouraged to attend remediation sessions, instructor office hours, and additional supervised laboratory practice opportunities.

The department is also exploring the purchase of additional veterinary training models and simulators for demonstration and practice purposes so that students may further refine their hands-on technical skills prior to graded evaluations involving live animals.

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The faculty will emphasize the importance of attendance, laboratory preparation, and completion of supplemental learning materials in strengthening skill retention and practical application throughout the curriculum. These efforts are intended to maintain achievement of the benchmark while promoting continued improvement in student technical competency and overall retention within the veterinary technology program.

SLO 2. Students completing the second/third year sequence of courses in Veterinary Technology will demonstrate the development of required didactic knowledge base and will demonstrate the required "hands-on" technical skills application (which will be documented for each student).

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives/outline.

VTEC 2060: Veterinary Pharmacological Calculations Lecture

VTEC 2600: Animal Care and Health Lecture

VTEC 3010: Diseases of Animals Lecture

VTEC 3200-3201: Veterinary Hospital Technology II Lecture/Laboratory (69 skills)

VTEC 3700-3701: Veterinary Radiology Lecture/Laboratory (11 skills)

Measure: 2.1. **(Direct – _Knowledge):** Students enrolled in VTEC 2060, 2600, 3010, 3200, and 3700 will demonstrate proficiency in accrediting-agency (AVMA-CVTEA) required didactic skills/knowledge base following standard criteria for evaluating essential skills. Eighty-five percent (85%) of students completing the course(s) will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding by averaging scores of 70% or higher on the examinations.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met with 90% of students achieving average examination scores of 70% or higher across VTEC 2060, 2600, 3010, 3200, and 3700. Faculty implemented curricular enhancements including revised pharmacology instruction, nutrition certification opportunities, expanded infectious disease assignments, anesthesia content revisions, and new radiology instructional resources.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty maintained these instructional enhancements during AC 2025-2026 while expanding case-based learning, review opportunities, and supplemental instructional materials. Additional emphasis was placed on areas identified through the VTNE assessment data.

In VTEC 2060 (Veterinary Pharmacological Calculations), additional weekly homework assignments and the implementation of a practice comprehensive final examination provided students with increased opportunities for repetition and self-assessment. While

the course continued to fall below the program benchmark with 79% of students meeting the measure, there was improvement compared to previous years. Additionally, students were provided with their final examination for review and were allowed opportunities to study missed questions and retry problems to reinforce learning and improve comprehension. Because this course contains a large proportion of first-year students, several students were still developing the academic skills and test taking strategies needed to succeed in the demanding veterinary technology curriculum. In VTEC 2600 (Animal Care and Health), students were given a project in which they researched the nutritional value of a selected brand of dog or cat food, allowing them to apply concepts related to pet food labeling, ingredient analysis, and animal nutrition. This project expanded student exposure to contemporary issues in veterinary medicine and encouraged critical evaluation of commercial diets. Although the course outcomes slightly regressed to 83% meeting the measure, practical nutrition activities strengthened student engagement and application of nutritional concepts.

In VTEC 3010 (Diseases of Animals), expanded instruction on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), swine infectious diseases, and discussions of real-world disease outbreaks such as the return of previously eradicated screwworm as well as Ebola and Hantavirus outbreaks enhanced student understanding of emerging diseases relevant to board preparation. The percentage of students meeting the measure decreased slightly to 88%; however, faculty observed improved class participation and stronger comprehension of infectious disease classification, prevention concepts, and the broader public health implications of zoonotic disease outbreaks during classroom discussions and assessments. VTEC 3200 (Veterinary Hospital Technology II) maintained exceptional performance with 100% of students meeting the measure. The addition of case-based anesthetic scenarios and problem-solving discussions allowed students to better apply anesthetic principles to realistic clinical situations while simultaneously strengthening communication and critical thinking skills. Faculty also introduced a new receptionist role within clinical activities, allowing students to practice medical charting, appointment scheduling, and client communication skills. This addition supported student preparation for the new communication domain included on the VTNE board examination. In VTEC 3700 (Veterinary Radiology), supplemental instructional videos on equine limb radiographic techniques and small animal dental positioning continued supporting student comprehension of advanced imaging concepts. The course maintained strong performance with 94% of students meeting the measure.

The department explored the purchase of equine radiology limb models to provide students with additional hands-on practice and improve technical positioning skills in equine imaging procedures. Faculty also recognized that all assessed courses during this cycle were taught by instructors teaching these specific courses for the first time

while the program was operating with one fewer faculty member than normal. Despite these challenges, the program successfully maintained achievement of the benchmark through faculty collaboration, curricular adjustments, supplemental instructional resources, and increased student support efforts. The program also observed improved student retention and progression within the veterinary technology curriculum compared to earlier assessment cycles.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met with 85% (92/108) of students achieving average examination scores of 70% or higher. VTEC 3200 maintained a 100% success rate, while VTEC 3010, 3700, and 2600 performed near or above the benchmark. VTEC 2060 showed improvement compared to earlier assessment cycles, despite remaining below the objective target. Overall, students demonstrated strong didactic knowledge acquisition across upper-level coursework.

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Scoring 70% avg. or higher on exams	Percent Students Meeting Measure
	VTEC 2060	25	17	68%
	VTEC 2600	17	17	100%
2023-2024	VTEC 3010	14	13	93%
	VTEC 3200	13	13	100%
	VTEC 3700	14	14	100%
	TOTAL	**83**	**74**	**89%**

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Scoring 70% avg. or higher on exams	Percent Students Meeting Measure
	VTEC 2060	37	29	78%
	VTEC 2600	13	12	92%
2024-2025	VTEC 3010	16	16	100%
	VTEC 3200	16	16	100%
	VTEC 3700	17	16	94%
	TOTAL	**99**	**89**	**90%**

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Scoring 70% avg. or higher on exams	Percent Students Meeting Measure
2025-2026	VTEC 2060	48	38	79%

VTEC 2600	18	15	83%
VTEC 3010	16	14	88%
VTEC 3200	10	10	100%
VTEC 3700	16	15	94%
TOTAL	**108**	**92**	**85%**

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2025–2026 results, faculty will implement course-specific instructional improvements and supplemental learning opportunities during AC 2026–2027 to strengthen student comprehension and retention of required didactic knowledge.

For VTEC 2060 (Veterinary Pharmacological Calculations), faculty will utilize weekly homework assignments, guided review sessions, and practice comprehensive examinations while also incorporating additional in-class problem-solving activities focused on dosage calculations and unit conversions. Early semester progress monitoring and intervention strategies will be emphasized to identify students struggling with foundational mathematical concepts before major examinations.

For VTEC 2600 (Animal Care and Health), faculty will expand applied nutrition activities and incorporate current veterinary nutrition trends and pet food evaluation discussions to strengthen real world application of course concepts. Additional case-based learning opportunities will be incorporated to enhance critical thinking and clinical skills.

For VTEC 3010 (Diseases of Animals), faculty will emphasize infectious disease categorization, emerging diseases, and board relevant content while incorporating additional review activities designed to reinforce memorization and long-term retention of causative agents and disease characteristics.

For VTEC 3200 (Veterinary Hospital Technology II), faculty will implement anesthetic case-based scenarios and clinical problem investigative discussions to strengthen application of anesthetic principles and improve patient assessment and client communication skills. The department is also exploring the purchase of additional anesthesia and monitoring simulation models to provide students with increased opportunities for hands-on practice and clinical scenario training.

For VTEC 3700 (Veterinary Radiology), faculty will utilize supplemental instructional videos and digital radiographic resources while expanding opportunities for image critique and interpretation exercises to improve student confidence and technical competency.

Additionally, the program will maintain efforts to recruit an additional faculty member to improve instructional support, balance faculty workload, and enhance student mentoring opportunities across the curriculum. Faculty will also emphasize early intervention,

academic support services, and supplemental review opportunities to further strengthen student success, retention, and preparedness for the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE).

Measure: 2.2. (Direct – _Skill / Ability): One hundred percent (100%) of students completing VTEC 3201 will demonstrate mastery of 69 animal medical and surgical nursing and anesthetist skills through participation in live animal surgical procedures laboratories and average 70% or higher scores on the course quizzes and examinations. One hundred percent (100%) of students completing VTEC 3701 will demonstrate the ability to complete 11 technical skills pertaining to diagnostic imaging and average scores of 70% or higher on the course quizzes and examinations. Each skill attainment will be documented in a student-specific booklet for student demonstration/completion. Booklets will be evaluated for entire completion prior to student enrollment in internship practicum courses.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met, although 97% of students successfully completed all required technical skills and course requirements. Faculty implemented mock surgery preparation activities, enhanced dental and radiographic training using simulation models, and additional guided laboratory experiences.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty implemented preparatory surgery videos, mock surgery laboratories, additional guided radiology practice sessions, demonstration videos, and equine limb positioning exercises in AC 2025-2026.

In VTEC 3201 (Veterinary Hospital Technology II Laboratory), 100% of students successfully completed all required skills and passed the course. Faculty implemented the mock surgery laboratory and preparatory instructional videos demonstrating expectations and workflow within live animal surgical laboratories. These resources helped students feel more prepared for the complexity of live animal procedures and strengthened student confidence prior to entering surgical laboratories. The use of the canine dental technician model in preliminary laboratory sessions also provided students with additional opportunities to refine dental prophylaxis techniques before performing procedures on live animals. Faculty observed that students entered live animal surgery laboratories with improved preparedness, stronger organization, and greater technical confidence compared to prior years.

In VTEC 3701 (Veterinary Radiology Laboratory), 94% of students achieved the measure. Additional guided laboratory time for equine limb positioning and dental radiography techniques, combined with demonstration videos available through Moodle, supported improved student repetition, troubleshooting ability, and technical skill development. The addition of equine limb positioning exercises utilizing the equine skeletal model prior to live animal radiographs further improved student familiarity with

positioning concepts and radiographic technique selection. Despite these interventions, one student did not successfully complete all required skills due to significant attendance and personal challenges that limited participation in required laboratory sessions.

Students enrolled in VTEC 3201 and VTEC 3701 are upper-level students nearing completion of the veterinary technology curriculum and generally demonstrate strong professional behaviors, technical competency, and understanding of the expectations necessary for success in clinical and laboratory settings. Faculty also noted sustained improvement in student retention and progression through the upper-level curriculum compared to earlier assessment cycles.

Overall, the high performance in these laboratory courses demonstrates that the implemented instructional supports, simulation models, guided practice opportunities, and supplemental resources are effective at prepare students for successful completion of advanced technical skills and clinical applications required within the veterinary technology profession.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was not met. Overall, 97% (25/26) of students successfully completed all required skills. VTEC 3201 maintained a 100% completion rate while VTEC 3701 achieved a 94% completion rate. The single student who did not meet the measure experienced attendance and personal challenges that limited completion of required laboratory experiences. Overall performance remained consistent with the previous assessment cycle.

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Performing All Documented Skills	Percent Students Meeting Measure
2023-2024	VTEC 3201	13	13	100%
	VTEC 3701	13	13	100%
	TOTAL	**26**	**26**	**100%**

Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Performing All Documented Skills	Percent Students Meeting Measure
2024-2025	VTEC 3201	16	16	100%
	VTEC 3701	17	16	94%
	TOTAL	**33**	**32**	**97%**

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Assessment Year	Course	# Students Enrolled	# Students Performing All Documented Skills	Percent Students Meeting Measure
2025-2026	VTEC 3201	10	10	100%
	VTEC 3701	16	15	94%
	TOTAL	**26**	**25**	**97%**

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2025–2026 results, faculty will implement preparatory laboratory activities, simulation exercises, and supplemental instructional resources in AC 2026–2027 to strengthen student technical competency and preparedness for live animal procedures.

In VTEC 3201 (Veterinary Hospital Technology II Laboratory), faculty will utilize mock surgery laboratories, preparatory videos, and surgery notebook evaluations prior to live animal procedures to ensure students are adequately prepared for the demands of surgical nursing and anesthesia laboratories. The department is also exploring the purchase of additional surgical nursing, anesthesia, and dental simulation models to provide students with expanded opportunities for hands-on practice and skill refinement before graded evaluations involving live animals.

In VTEC 3701 (Veterinary Radiology Laboratory), faculty will provide additional guided practice sessions for equine limb positioning and dental radiography techniques while expanding the library of demonstration videos and troubleshooting resources available to students through Moodle. The department is also exploring the purchase of equine limb positioning models and additional radiographic teaching aids to increase opportunities for repetitive practice and improve technical confidence prior to live animal imaging procedures.

Faculty will also emphasize early identification of students experiencing attendance or academic difficulties so that intervention strategies, remediation opportunities, and individualized support can be implemented before students fall behind in required laboratory competencies. These efforts are intended to improve consistency in student success, maintain strong technical skill achievement, and support the program’s goal of reaching 100% student completion of all required clinical and laboratory competencies.

SLO 3. Following completion of other required courses entitled Veterinary Technology (VTEC), each student must enroll in a 12-credit hour internship practicum with 480 clock hours working under the direct supervision of veterinarians and/or credentialed veterinary technicians/technologists. The supervisor must submit comprehensive evaluations of each student’s technical skills, reliability, and attitude

while completing their practicum. Each student submits an evaluation of the internship site and supervisory staff to the program director at the completion of the internship practicum course. The students will receive positive ratings greater than or equal to 95% on each item.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives/outline.

VTEC 2900: Veterinary Internship Practicum

Measure 3.1. (Direct – _Skill / Ability): For student's enrolled in VTEC 2900, their direct internship supervising veterinary professional will submit a written evaluation of the student's technical performance of the required 301 technical skills, rating the skills performance for each one on a scale of measurement of 0 – not applicable; 1 – poor; 2 – good; or 3 – excellent. Program expectations are ratings of good-to-excellent will be earned for 95% or more of the student's skills.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met with internship supervisors rating student skills as good or excellent 99.5% for each skill. Faculty attributed this success to repeated practice of essential skills, increased use of teaching models, and supplemental instructional resources.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty emphasized skill repetition, peer instruction, simulation-based learning, and CPR training opportunities during AC 2025-2026.

The program had fewer internship students during this assessment cycle, allowing faculty to provide more individualized instruction and feedback prior to placement. Students repeatedly practiced animal restraint, venipuncture, anesthesia monitoring, dentistry, and surgical nursing skills through hands-on laboratory experiences. Faculty also used canine teaching models, dental models, and the canine CPR simulator to strengthen technical skill development.

Internship supervisors reported that students demonstrated professionalism, adaptability, and strong foundational technical abilities. Compared to the previous cycle, ratings of excellent decreased slightly while ratings of good increased; however, no poor ratings were reported, indicating students consistently met or exceeded competency expectations.

Overall, the results indicate that emphasis on repetition, simulation-based learning, and hands-on laboratory instruction effectively prepared students for internship performance.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. Internship supervisors rated 100% of evaluated skills as either good or excellent, with no skills receiving poor ratings. Excellent ratings accounted for 64.3% of evaluations and good ratings accounted for 35.7%. These results demonstrated the strong preparation of students for clinical practice environments.

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Assessment Year	VTEC 2900	Excellent	Good	Poor
2023-2024	# ratings of skills performance	2422	800	14
	% ratings of skills performance	74.8%	24.7%	0.4%

Assessment Year	VTEC 2900	Excellent	Good	Poor
2024-2025	# ratings of skills performance	1366	722	11
	% ratings of skills performance	65.1%	34.4%	0.5%

Assessment Year	VTEC 2900	Excellent	Good	Poor
2025-2026	# ratings of skills performance	236	131	0
	% ratings of skills performance	64.3%	35.7%	0.0%

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was met. Faculty will reinforce technical skills through hands-on laboratories, peer teaching, guided repetition, and simulation-based learning during AC 2026–2027. The program will use CPR and other technical training models to strengthen student confidence and clinical competency prior to internship placement.

Faculty will also collaborate with internship supervisors to monitor student preparedness and identify areas needing additional emphasis. The program is reaching out to local internship clinics to strengthen collaboration, maintain open communication, and tour facilities to support student success and clinical training opportunities. Efforts to recruit additional faculty support and provide supplemental remediation opportunities will also help maintain strong student performance during internships.

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Measure 3.2. (Indirect – Attitude / Reliability): Each student enrolled in VTEC 2900 is evaluated by the supervisor in the veterinary clinical setting on several subjective performance indicators which pertain to job performance. The final evaluation includes ratings of Above Average, Average, Below Average, or Not Observed, for each student's maturity/judgment, dependability/reliability, initiative/originality, function as a team member, communication skills, work-place character/integrity/ethics, and potential as a veterinary technician. Additionally, the supervisor is asked to state the student's strongest and weakest points. The program expects 5% or less negative ratings (Below Average) for each student.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met with 100% of students receiving average or above-average ratings on subjective workplace characteristics. Faculty incorporated professionalism measures into laboratory grading rubrics, communication assessments, and collaborative learning activities.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty implemented rotating laboratory groups, ethics activities, and communication exercises as well as placed emphasis on attendance, punctuality, and professionalism during AC 2025-2026.

Faculty emphasized professionalism, communication, teamwork, punctuality, and ethical conduct throughout the curriculum. Laboratory rubrics in VTEC 1011 and 1031 included measures related to preparedness, attendance, and professionalism, while communication and client interaction skills were reinforced in VTEC 3201 and 4200. Group projects and collaborative laboratory activities also supported teamwork and professional communication development.

Above average ratings increased from 57% in the previous cycle to 72% while maintaining zero below average ratings. Faculty believe this reflects stronger student maturity, communication, and teamwork skills developed through collaborative and clinical learning experiences.

There were fewer internship students during this cycle, resulting in fewer evaluations but allowing for more individualized mentoring and feedback prior to placement. Supervisors consistently reported that students demonstrated professionalism, adaptability, and positive workplace attitudes.

Overall, results indicate that the program effectively prepares students for professional success in veterinary clinical settings through continued emphasis on professionalism, accountability, communication, ethics, and teamwork.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. No students received below-average ratings in any subjective category. Seventy-two percent (72%) of ratings were above average and 28% were average. Although fewer internship students were

enrolled during this assessment cycle, resulting in fewer total evaluations, supervisors consistently reported strong professionalism, teamwork, communication skills, and workplace reliability.

Assessment Year	VTEC 2900	Above Average	Average	Below Average
2023-2024	# ratings of subjective characteristics	130	34	7
	% ratings of subjective characteristics	76%	20%	4%

Assessment Year	VTEC 2900	Above Average	Average	Below Average
2024-2025	# ratings of subjective characteristics	66	50	0
	% ratings of subjective characteristics	57%	43%	0%

Assessment Year	VTEC 2900	Above Average	Average	Below Average
2025-2026	# ratings of subjective characteristics	13	5	0
	% ratings of subjective characteristics	72%	28%	0%

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was met. Faculty will emphasize professional behavior, communication skills, teamwork, and workplace accountability throughout the curriculum during AC 2026–2027.

Professionalism and communication expectations will remain integrated into laboratory grading rubrics, clinical activities, group projects, and collaborative exercises across introductory and upper-level courses. Faculty will reinforce attendance, punctuality, preparedness, ethical conduct, and client communication skills during laboratory and clinical

experiences. Additionally, the program added a receptionist position within surgery laboratories to better prepare students for real-world veterinary practice scenarios and strengthen client communication skills that had been identified as an area needing improvement in previous years. This role allows students to practice client interactions, appointment coordination, professional communication, and teamwork within a clinical setting.

The program will maintain communication with internship supervisors to gather feedback on student workplace performance and provide mentoring and early intervention for students needing additional support in professionalism or communication skills. These efforts are intended to maintain strong employer satisfaction and prepare graduates to function effectively as dependable members of the veterinary healthcare team.

SLO 4. Students will demonstrate proficiency in Veterinary Technology by earning passing scores the first time taking the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE) equal to the national average when evaluated over the most recent three-year window of time and will meet or exceed the national average for each measured domain score in the most recent evaluation available.

Measure 4.1. (Direct – _Knowledge): Students taking the **Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE)** will demonstrate proficiency by obtaining passing scores in percentages *equal to the national average percent* of students passing the examination on the first attempt, when examining the most recently available three-year school report. The VTNE is scored from 200-800, with 425 being a passing score.

School reports are provided by the test administrators for each examination cycle and for the most recent three-year period. In the past, the three-year period was based on an academic calendar year ending on June 30. However, the AVMA-CVTEA has mandated changes this year. The three-year reporting period must be changed to a calendar year ending on December 31 and data provided to the program director of each school has changed accordingly.

Finding. Target was not met.

AC 2023-2024: Improvement and target met. Northwestern State graduates had a 76.7% pass rate over the last 3 years; the national average pass rate was 66.3%.

AC 2024-2025: Regression but target met. Northwestern State graduates had a 69.7% pass rate over the last 3 years; the national average pass rate was 64.9%.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Northwestern State graduates achieved a three-year first-time VTNE pass rate of 69.7%, exceeding the national average of 64.9%. Faculty encouraged enrollment in VTEC 4200 Comprehensive Review by incorporating

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VTNE-style questions throughout the curriculum and encouraging graduates to test shortly after graduation.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty expanded access to VTNE preparation resources including updated candidate handbooks, practice examinations, and focused review opportunities during AC 2025-2026.

Faculty encouraged enrollment in VTEC 4200 Comprehensive Review and incorporated VTNE-style questions and computerized testing activities throughout the curriculum. Updated VTNE preparation materials and PSI practice exams were also provided to students.

Faculty determined that delaying the VTNE beyond one year after graduation negatively affected pass rates. The AVMA-CVTEA reporting transition also contributed to fluctuations in reported outcomes. During this cycle, the program operated with one fewer faculty member while several instructors taught courses for the first time. Despite these challenges, faculty maintained curricular updates, added board-style review materials, and emphasized communication, critical thinking, and technical skills.

Although the three-year benchmark was not met, improved 2025 performance and strong pass rates among recent graduates suggest that current review strategies and curricular improvements are positively impacting VTNE preparedness.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was not met. Northwestern State graduates achieved a 55.6% first-time pass rate during the January 2023–December 2025 reporting period compared to the national average of 66.7%. However, when examining only 2025 testing data, first-time test takers achieved a 67% pass rate compared to the national average of 68%. Graduates testing within one year of graduation achieved an 86% pass rate, supporting faculty observations that early testing significantly improves success.

VTNE	**Pass**	**Fail**
July 2020 — June 2023		
NSU graduates' performance (#)	19	6
NSU graduates' performance (%)	76%	24%
National average (%)	69.0%	31.0%

VTNE	**Pass**	**Fail**
July 2021— June 2024		
NSU graduates' performance (#)	23	7
NSU graduates' performance (%)	76.7%	23.3%
National average (%)	66.3%	33.7%

Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

VTNE	Pass	Fail
January 2022— December 2024		
NSU graduates' performance (#)	23	10
NSU graduates' performance (%)	69.7%	30.3%
National average (%)	64.9%	35.1%

VTNE	Pass	Fail
January 2023— December 2025		
NSU graduates' performance (#)	15	12
NSU graduates' performance (%)	55.6%	44.4%
National average (%)	66.7%	33.3%

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was not met based on the required three-year VTNE reporting period. Faculty will strengthen VTNE preparation strategies during AC 2026–2027 to improve first-time pass rates and graduate readiness for licensure examinations.

Faculty will encourage students to enroll in VTEC 4200 Comprehensive Review and emphasize the importance of taking the VTNE within one year of graduation due to higher pass rates among recent graduates. VTNE-style questions, computerized testing, and case-based exercises will remain integrated throughout the curriculum.

Additional review activities and remediation opportunities will be incorporated into upper-level coursework, and students will receive access to PSI practice examinations and VTNE preparation resources. The program will also recruit an additional faculty member and monitor VTNE performance data to guide future curricular improvements. These efforts are intended to improve graduate preparedness and increase first-time VTNE pass rates in future assessment cycles.

Measure 4.2. (Direct – Knowledge): Ten domain scores by subject are provided to each school, which is helpful in determining when/where program curriculum changes/improvements are needed. The program director, along with program veterinary faculty/staff, evaluates the data provided in the most recently available school report for a comprehensive view of a comparison of our graduates to a national standard by subject. The goal is to have students meeting or exceeding the national average scores for each domain subject. A change has been made by the VTNE testing agency (American Association of Veterinary State Boards) to allow four testing windows to be conducted annually beginning in 2025 compared to three previously.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. Communication/Professional Support, Diagnostic Imaging, and Animal Care & Nursing demonstrated the largest deficits compared

to national averages, while Surgical Nursing, Laboratory Procedures, and Emergency Medicine/Critical Care exceeded national performance.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, faculty implemented targeted improvements in AC 2025-2026, including communication exercises, rotating laboratory groups, peer teaching activities, ethics discussions, supplemental radiology videos, guided imaging laboratories, equine positioning exercises, and expanded dental instruction.

Communication/Professional Support, Pharmacy & Pharmacology, Anesthesia, and Pain Management/Analgesia remained below national averages. Communication/Professional Support showed the largest discrepancy, although scores improved from the previous cycle. This is only the second year of the revised communication domain on the VTNE, and faculty are still evaluating the broad scope and expectations of this area. Despite lower scores, improvement in communication and teamwork was observed in internship evaluations and laboratory assessments.

Faculty targeted curricular changes to address deficit areas. Communication skills were reinforced through rotating lab partners, peer teaching, ethics discussions, and the addition of a receptionist role in surgery labs to simulate client communication and appointment coordination. In Diagnostic Imaging, supplemental videos, guided lab repetition, and equine positioning exercises continued to strengthen radiographic positioning and technique skills.

Faculty also noted that graduates testing within one year of graduation performed better than those delaying the exam. Overall, although the target was not fully met across all domains, the program demonstrated meaningful improvement in several previously deficient areas, and the overall raw total score exceeded the national average during the 2025 testing cycle.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was not met. However, Northwestern State graduates met or exceeded the national average in six of ten domains, including Surgical Nursing, Dentistry, Laboratory Procedures, Emergency Medicine/Critical Care, Animal Care & Nursing, and Diagnostic Imaging. Diagnostic Imaging and Animal Care & Nursing improved sufficiently to reach national averages after being identified as deficit areas in the previous assessment cycle. Additionally, the overall raw total score of 68.11% exceeded the national average of 66.14%, demonstrating meaningful improvement in overall graduate performance.

VTNE Domain July 15 -August 15, 2023	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	61.11%	61.67%
Surgical Nursing	76.47%	71.81%
Dentistry	56.67%	62.68%

Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

Laboratory Procedures	78.82%	67.06%
Animal Care & Nursing	71.33%	67.10%
Diagnostic Imaging	74.55%	66.43%
Anesthesia	70.91%	66.53%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	70.00%	66.29%
Pain Management/Analgesia	72.73%	69.47%
RAW TOTAL	**70.53%**	**66.60%**

VTNE Domain November 15-December 15, 2023	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	80.00%	61.04%
Communication / Professional Support	85.71%	70.49%
Surgical Nursing	85.00%	64.60%
Dentistry	90.00%	65.80%
Laboratory Procedures	78.57%	59.97%
Animal Care & Nursing	86.67%	65.04%
Diagnostic Imaging	77.78%	68.89%
Anesthesia	95.00%	63.34%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	90.00%	63.79%
Pain Management/Analgesia	90.00%	65.79%
RAW TOTAL	**86.00%**	**64.25%**

VTNE Domain March 15-April 17, 2024	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	60.0%	61.79%
Communication / Professional Support	31.43%	61.8%
Surgical Nursing	73.0%	66.36%
Dentistry	58.0%	63.36%
Laboratory Procedures	65.71%	56.60%
Animal Care & Nursing	60.67%	65.49%
Diagnostic Imaging	48.89%	64.19%

Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

Anesthesia	64.00%	65.34%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	58.0%	66.65%
Pain Management/Analgesia	54.0%	63.22%
RAW TOTAL	**60.27%**	**63.8%**

VTNE Domain AC 2023-2024	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	62.32%	61.51%
Communication / Professional Support	40.48%	66.74%
Surgical Nursing	75.67%	68.42%
Dentistry	60.3%	63.77%
Laboratory Procedures	72.84%	62.58%
Animal Care & Nursing	67.88%	66.12%
Diagnostic Imaging	63.18%	66.66%
Anesthesia	69.96%	65.31%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	66.36%	65.62%
Pain Management/Analgesia	65.79%	66.96%
RAW TOTAL	**67.27%**	**65.26%**

VTNE Domain July 15 -August 15, 2024	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	85%	65.89%
Communication / Professional Support	28.57%	61.47%
Surgical Nursing	75%	68.9%
Dentistry	100%	69.44%
Laboratory Procedures	78.57%	59.05%
Animal Care & Nursing	76.67%	67.78%
Diagnostic Imaging	66.67%	65.35%
Anesthesia	85%	69.6%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	70%	64.5%

Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

Pain Management/Analgesia	90%	63.1%
RAW TOTAL	**78%**	**66.25%**

VTNE Domain November 15-December 15, 2024	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	57.78%	62.68%
Communication / Professional Support	60.32%	63.12%
Surgical Nursing	65.56%	66.37%
Dentistry	61.11%	59.16%
Laboratory Procedures	57.94%	59.24%
Animal Care & Nursing	58.52%	63.98%
Diagnostic Imaging	60.49%	62.40%
Anesthesia	57.22%	64.37%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	62.22%	60.87%
Pain Management/Analgesia	58.89%	63.58%
RAW TOTAL	**59.78%**	**63.05%**

VTNE Domain Calendar Year 2024	NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct	National Avg. Percent Correct
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	60.88%	63.85%
Communication / Professional Support	52.10%	61.90%
Surgical Nursing	69.41%	67.34%
Dentistry	63.53%	64.97%
Laboratory Procedures	61.34%	58.26%
Animal Care & Nursing	60.78%	65.95%
Diagnostic Imaging	57.52%	64%
Anesthesia	62.65%	66.86%
Emergency Med/Critical Care	64.12%	63.79%
Pain Management/Analgesia	61.18%	64%
RAW TOTAL	**62.08%**	**64.56%**

VTNE Domain Calendar Year 2025	**NSU Grad. Avg. Percent Correct**	**National Avg. Percent Correct**
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	**60.00%**	**65.00%**

Communication / Professional Support	**57.14%**	**71.43%**
Surgical Nursing	**75.00%**	**70.00%**
Dentistry	**70.00%**	**60.00%**
Laboratory Procedures	**71.43%**	**64.29%**
Animal Care & Nursing	**66.67%**	**66.67%**
Diagnostic Imaging	**66.67%**	**66.67%**
Anesthesia	**60.00%**	**65.00%**
Emergency Med/Critical Care	**80.00%**	**70.00%**
Pain Management/Analgesia	**60.00%**	**70.00%**
RAW TOTAL	**68.11%**	**66.14%**

Decision. In AC 2025–2026, the target was not met. Faculty will target curricular improvements in AC 2026–2027, focusing on Communication/Professional Support, Pharmacy & Pharmacology, Anesthesia, and Pain Management/Analgesia.

Communication skills will be reinforced through rotating lab partners, peer teaching, client communication activities, and simulated clinical roles in laboratory courses. Additional case-based calculations, anesthetic monitoring scenarios, pharmacology review activities, and VTNE-style questions will remain integrated throughout the curriculum to strengthen technical knowledge and test-taking skills.

Diagnostic Imaging instruction will emphasize demonstration videos, guided laboratory practice, equine positioning exercises, and radiograph critique activities to improve technical competency and interpretation skills.

Faculty will encourage graduates to take the VTNE within one year of graduation and will monitor domain-specific performance data to guide future curricular revisions and instructional emphasis.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results: The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2025-2026. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2024-2025 results.

- **Measure 1.1:** Increased student engagement and accountability through reading assignments, homework assessments, attendance tracking, weekly reminders, mentoring, FLAME sessions, student hours, and remediation opportunities.

Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

- **Measures 1.1 and 2.1:** Improved student retention and progression rates between introductory and upper-level veterinary technology courses compared to previous assessment cycles.
- **Measures 1.2, 2.2, and 3.1**: Expanded hands-on laboratory practice and repetition of technical skills including animal restraint, venipuncture, anesthesia monitoring, dentistry, radiography, and surgical nursing.
- **Measures 1.2, 2.2, and 3.1:** Used of simulation models including canine dental simulators, canine CPR simulators, articulating canine teaching models, and equine skeletal models to improve student confidence and preparedness prior to live animal procedures.
- **Measures 1.2, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, and 4.2:** Maintained strong student outcomes in technical skills, professionalism, internship evaluations, and several VTNE performance domains despite reduced faculty staffing and multiple instructors teaching courses for the first time.
- **Measures 2.1, 2.2, and 4.2:** Developed additional instructional videos and online resources for Veterinary Hospital Technology, Veterinary Radiology, Clinical Pathology, anesthesia, dentistry, and diagnostic imaging courses.
- **Measures 2.2 and 3.1:** Added mock surgery laboratories, equine positioning laboratories, peer teaching activities, guided repetition, and case-based learning exercises to strengthen technical competency and critical-thinking skills.
- **Measures 3.1 and 3.2:** Smaller internship cohorts allowed for more individualized mentoring, feedback, and professional development prior to clinical placements.
- **Measures 3.2 and 4.2:** Improved communication skills, professionalism, and teamwork through rotating laboratory partners, ethics discussions, peer teaching activities, group projects, client communication exercises, and receptionist roles in surgery laboratories.
- **Measure 4.1:** Encouraged student enrollment in VTEC 4200 Comprehensive Review and emphasized timely VTNE testing following graduation to improve examination success.
- **Measures 4.1 and 4.2:** Increased VTNE preparation through incorporation of VTNE-style questions, computerized examinations, cumulative reviews, case studies, review activities, and practice examinations throughout the curriculum.
- **Measure 4.2:** Implemented curricular revisions based on VTNE domain analysis in Communication/Professional Support, Dentistry, Diagnostic Imaging, Pharmacy & Pharmacology, Anesthesia, and Pain Management/Analgesia.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2025-2026 and will take steps to continue to improve student learning in AC 2026-2027:

Assessment Cycle 2025 – 2026

- **Measure 1.1:** Maintain attendance tracking, reading assignments, homework assessments, and weekly reminders to improve student accountability, preparation, and retention of course material.
- **Measures 1.1 and 2.1**: Emphase early intervention strategies through mentoring, faculty office hours, FLAME sessions, remediation opportunities, and progress monitoring for academically at-risk students.
- **Measures 1.1, 2.1, 4.1, and 4.2:** Recruit an additional faculty member to improve instructional support, reduce faculty workload, and increase opportunities for individualized student mentoring and remediation.
- **Measures 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, and 4.2:** Evaluate assessment results, VTNE domain data, internship evaluations, and course outcomes annually to guide future curricular revisions and targeted program improvements.
- **Measures 1.2 and 2.2:** Expand opportunities for guided hands-on practice prior to graded live animal procedures through mock laboratories, guided repetition, and simulation-based learning activities.
- **Measures 1.2, 2.2, and 3.1:** Utilize and expande simulation models and teaching aids, including canine CPR simulators, dental technician models, anesthesia models, venipuncture trainers, and equine positioning models to strengthen technical confidence and competency prior to live animal application.
- **Measures 2.1, 4.1, and 4.2:** Expand the use of cumulative reviews, low-stakes quizzes, VTNE-style questions, computerized testing, and case-based learning activities throughout the curriculum to strengthen critical-thinking skills and board examination preparedness.
- **Measures 2.1 and 4.2:** Maintain focused instructional improvements in Pharmacy & Pharmacology, Anesthesia, Pain Management/Analgesia, Dentistry, and Diagnostic Imaging through additional case-based scenarios, dosage calculations, anesthetic monitoring exercises, and review activities.
- **Measures 2.2 and 3.1:** Emphasize repeated exposure to essential technical skills throughout upper-level laboratories and internship preparation courses to strengthen long-term retention and clinical performance.
- **Measures 2.2 and 4.2:** Enhance Diagnostic Imaging instruction through demonstration videos, guided radiograph critique activities, equine positioning laboratories, and repetitive positioning practice.
- **Measures 3.1 and 3.2:** Maintain communication with internship supervisors and clinical partners to gather feedback regarding student preparedness, professionalism, and technical competency
- **Measure 3.2:** Reinforce professionalism, punctuality, teamwork, dependability, and ethical conduct throughout both introductory and upper-level laboratory courses.
- **Measures 3.2 and 4.2:** Increase emphasis on Communication/Professional Support skills through rotating laboratory groups, peer teaching activities, client

communication exercises, ethics discussions, and simulated veterinary practice roles such as receptionist duties during surgery laboratories.

- **Measure 4.1:** Encourage students to enroll in VTEC 4200 Comprehensive Review and strongly encourage graduates to take the VTNE within one year of graduation.

These efforts are intended to strengthen student learning outcomes, improve graduate preparedness for veterinary clinical practice and licensure examinations, maintain compliance with AVMA-CVTEA accreditation standards, and support the continued success of the Veterinary Technology Program.