

CAETA Online Program Introduction

The advancement of the human-animal bond and animal welfare has deservedly led to the need for veterinarians to elevate their understanding of death and death-related issues. Our society is looking towards the veterinary profession to respect and support beloved pets through the end of life journey, including expert euthanasia should it be chosen to relieve suffering. The purpose of this program is to provide a cohesive body of work to support students interested in advanced euthanasia. CAETA graduates retain ongoing access to the online library of resources, the euthanasia training manual, and additional modules in euthanasia-related topics.

10-hour Certificate Program in Euthanasia

Topics include the history and societal impact of euthanasia, drug pharmacology, caregiver considerations, pre-euthanasia sedation protocols, euthanasia techniques, case reviews, and more. The CAETA mission is to reduce challenging appointments and help veterinarians find balance and harmony. Everything taught closely follows the AVMA euthanasia guidelines, with focus on achieving a stress-free, pain-free passing. The techniques and philosophy taught in the program are those commonly used in human-animal bond centered hospitals and clinics.

Module 1: Overview of Companion Animal Euthanasia

Abstract: Euthanasia is a very broad and diverse procedure with deep history and ethical implications. For decades, the veterinary profession has been evolving the act of taking life to match current welfare and societal demands. In this hour, we will explore the history of euthanasia as it pertains to all species, review veterinary euthanasia guidelines, and examine the ethics behind it all.

Learning Objectives :

After completing this hour, students will be able to:

1. Comprehend the broad history of animal euthanasia
2. Understand how the methods we use today have come about
3. Appreciate ethical nuances around this sensitive topic

Module 2: Caregiver and Pet Considerations

Abstract: A large component behind CAETA's development is to teach ways of supporting those who love companion animals. There are numerous caregiver and pet considerations affecting exactly why and how we perform euthanasia. In this hour, we will discover how to partner and guide caregivers through such a difficult, emotional time.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this hour, students will be able to:

1. Apply client communication techniques for increased clarity
2. Better assist clients preparing for the euthanasia experience
3. Offer more empathy and support for the bereaved

Module 3: Physiology and Pharmacology

Abstract: Euthanasia is a process requiring more comprehension than just knowing how to give an injection. As with any procedure, it's important to know how it works and how to achieve a peaceful passing. In this hour, we will examine the physiology of death and learn just how the drugs we use work on the body.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this hour, students will be able to:

1. Explain the stages of dying
2. Better recognize what are normal and abnormal reactions to drugs
3. Understand how euthanasia drugs accomplish death

Module 4: Pre-euthanasia Sedation/Anesthesia Protocols

Abstract: The use of pre-euthanasia sedation or anesthesia to relax companion animals is becoming more and more common. Veterinary teams around the world are seeing the benefits of providing a more peaceful and anxiety-free experience. We will examine pros and cons to their use and review protocols that can be immediately implemented in practice.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this hour, students will be able to:

1. Determine when to reach for a sedative protocol versus an anesthetic
2. Explain expected physical changes to clients
3. Quickly modify protocols to meet the patient's unique needs

Module 5: Euthanasia Techniques

Abstract: Euthanasia requires more skill than just giving an injection. There are 5 common injection sites for use in most companion animals; IV, IC, IP, IR, IH. The goal is to reach for the best one given the situation. Our goal during this hour is to review these 5 injection types and have a bit of time to review inhalation of anesthetics and physical methods, should the need ever arise. All injection techniques can be practiced during the technique laboratory.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this hour, students will be able to:

1. Effectively administer euthanasia solution using each technique
2. Make better decisions towards technique selection
3. Administer inhaled anesthetics or direct physical methods if necessary

Module 6: Challenging Situations

Abstract: Even the best taught, most prepared veterinarian is going to come across a challenging situation from time to time. While we want everything to go perfectly smooth, truth is things must go wrong every once and awhile. It's how we handle these challenging situations that makes the difference between a failure and a beautiful experience. We will talk openly during this hour about unexpected results, special circumstances, and challenges of all kinds.

Learning Objectives:

After completion of this hour, students will be able to:

1. Breathe easier knowing they are not alone. Everyone faces difficult cases.
2. Troubleshoot quickly to provide a peaceful passing
3. Better explain to clients why the challenge/issue occurred

Module 7: Case Review

Abstract: Everyone learns best through real world case review. The cases presented will be typical to daily in-clinic and mobile practice and include all companion animals, including exotics and companion livestock. There should be time to review student cases as well.

Learning Objectives:

After completion of this hour, students will be able to:

1. Apply what they learned into their own cases
2. Better understand exotic pet euthanasia
3. Better understand companion livestock euthanasia

Modules 8-9: Technique demonstration and Supply Review

Abstract: These 2 hours provide hands on euthanasia practice using companion animal cadavers. Students will be able to isolate venous pathways, practice organ injections on visible organs, make paw prints and ink prints, test out various supplies, and much more. This is an opportunity to learn the anatomy again and gain invaluable technique training from the instructor and other participants alike. We also outline all the necessary supplies for both the hospital and mobile setting. Being prepared for all scenarios is the secret to success. It brings peace of mind and helps ensure the veterinary team is able to successfully complete the procedure. No detail is too big or too small.

Learning Objectives:

After completing these hours, students will be able to:

1. More confidently administer via the intraorgan route
2. Choose the best vein to work with every time
3. Provide respectful body handling

Module 10: Euthanasia Team Training: Setting standards

Abstract: This hour will outline euthanasia-related factors affecting the health and overall well-being of the veterinary team. We will focus on standardizing protocols for efficiency and consistency, review team training procedures, and discuss use of a team training manual. Attention will also be given to help personnel cope with euthanasia-related stress.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this hour, students will be able to;

1. Identify factors that affect staff positively and negatively
2. Incorporate use of a euthanasia team training manual
3. Strategize ways to reduce euthanasia-related stressors