Best Friends Animal Society
Dog Lifesaving Fundamentals (DLF)

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General Information

Rationale

The animal services field is evolving rapidly, and lifesaving is increasing, however the field itself does not have an accreditation process in place and there is still ambiguity around the purpose of animal shelters and animal control. The community expects that their animal shelter and control organizations save pets lives, keep pets with their families and ensure lost pets are returned to their homes.

This comprehensive course will redefine what an adoptable dog is and explore options for positive outcomes in communities across the nation. Participants will learn about the proven policies, programs and procedures necessary to meet the community's expectation of dog lifesaving.

The program leverages the lifesaving knowledge and skills of practitioners. The course offers clarity on what success looks like and is also an opportunity for participants to deepen their learning and understanding of positive results in dog lifesaving. Each module will provide the learner with background and practical information for the student as well as the practitioner in the profession.

Program Vision/Mission

Vision: The Best Friends Dog Lifesaving Fundamentals (DLF) course is a prestigious and comprehensive course that increases lifesaving for dogs in communities across the nation.

Mission: The Dog Lifesaving Fundamentals course facilitates the lifesaving knowledge and skills of practitioners, community members, advocates, and volunteers.

Program Components/Benefits

- The DLF focuses foundationally on how lifesaving can be increased
- Activities and discussions in every module are designed to facilitate increased lifesaving
- The DLF creates a cohort community of animal services advocates and professionals for support
- Students are empowered to lead their communities in lifesaving strategies and programs
- Advocates and professionals are better prepared for supporting or leading programs
- Graduates may be invited as appropriate to participate in future cohort classes
- Each successful graduate will earn one credit and a Dog Lifesaving Fundamentals course digital badge from Southern Utah University (SUU)

Course Prerequisites

None required. Introduction to Animal Services and Finding Success in Animal Services are suggested, especially for those new to the field.

Participant expectations

During the 7-week program, participants will:

- Complete all 7 comprehensive modules
- Actively participate in all online discussions
- Complete all assignments
- Anticipate spending about 45 total hours on all the above
- Understand why data is crucial to lifesaving decision making

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Identify barriers to dog lifesaving in shelters
- Create understanding of how to increase dog lifesaving in a community
- Acquire the skills and knowledge to implement what is learned in the course as relevant to the profession
- Understand the value of and participate in networking, building coalitions/partnerships and working together to save lives.

Program Success Measurement

- Pre-course survey: assessment of current knowledge
- Modules, assignments and discussions completion
- Post-course survey: assessment of knowledge gained
- Track participant data post course to measure lifesaving efforts

Course Materials

Required Materials

Humane Animal Control: Effective Enforcement, Shelter Management, Local Government Support and Community Engagement Best Friends Network Partner Resources (Vol. 1), Best Friends Animal Society, Retrieved 2022

Optional Materials

- Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know by Adam Grant
- Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff 2nd Edition by Victoria A. Cussen (Editor), Pamela J. Reid (Editor), Kristen A. Collins (Editor), Brian A. DiGangi (Editor)
- Reimagining Animal Sheltering: Support Services and Community-Driven Sheltering Methods by Julie Levy (Editor), Kevin Horecka (Editor), Peter Wolf (Editor), E Susan Amirian (Editor)

Program Outline

Program Introduction

This Dog Lifesaving Fundamentals course will offer practitioners, community members, advocates, and volunteers an opportunity to learn about the proven policies, programs and procedures necessary to meet the community's expectations. The course will offer clarity on what success looks like and will also be an opportunity for students to deepen their learning and understanding of positive results.

Introduction to Dog Lifesaving: Week 1

- Scope: This module provides an overview of the current state of dog lifesaving in the United States including the barriers to lifesaving, proven practices that can address these barriers and the role of pilot programming in contemporary animal services.

- Learning Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to identify the current challenges to dog lifesaving and reflect on how to address these challenges using proven practices (such as the use of pilot programs).

Data Analysis and Action Planning: Week 2

- Scope: This module provides an overview of using data analysis and action planning to evaluate existing programming and determine which programs are most needed to support dog lifesaving.
- Learning Objective: Upon completion of the module, participants will understand the gap analysis process and how to use data to develop or enhance programs that meet community and lifesaving needs. Students will also be able to implement pilot programs to address any lifesaving gaps identified in the gap analysis.

Strategic Intake: Week 3

- Scope: This module is an overview on the importance of engaging the community as well as animal services staff and volunteers to achieve lifesaving results through strategic intake.
- Learning Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to understand how strategic intake can improve the flow of dogs into the shelter and how to create and/or strengthen an intake diversion program.

Canine Handling and Enrichment: Week 4

- Scope: This module is designed to discuss the importance of safe canine handling practices, understanding canine body language and the critical need for a formal canine enrichment program in a shelter's daily operations.
- Learning Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be knowledgeable of dog body language and the practices necessary to safely handle dogs in a shelter environment. In addition, participants will have the ability to plan and practice keeping dogs cognitively healthy through a well thought out enrichment program.

Adoption, Foster and Volunteer Programs: Week 5

- Scope: This module examines the proven lifesaving practices for adoption, foster and volunteer programs for the purpose of increasing lifesaving within your dog population.
- Learning Objective: After completion of this module students will be able to create, advocate for and implement lifesaving adoption, foster, and volunteer programs for dogs.

Dog Behavior and Well-being: Week 6

- Scope: This module explores the ways in which we communicate with adopters, fosters and other stakeholders about dog behavior and management strategies for common behaviors that affect canine well-being and safe handling.
- Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to objectively describe behaviors and understand processes for gathering behavioral information. In addition, the module will cover creating a case management approach for dogs that are at-risk or being considered for end-of-life decisions.

Shelter Medicine: Week 7

- Scope: This module reviews medical guidelines as they relate to dog lifesaving including shelter medicine and best practices in foster and adoption medical guidelines.
- Learning Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will have the knowledge to triage common medical conditions and understand medical protocols and procedures to guide the dogs in their care on the most appropriate path given their medical condition and resources available.

<div align="center">Course Methodologies</div>

Modules
The cornerstone of this course are self-study modules. Each one will take between 60 - 90 minutes. Full completion is required to earn full credit.

Discussions
During this course, you will have weekly opportunities to discuss ideas gained from the modules online. This is a great forum in which to share strategies and learn from one another. Please make an initial post and respond to at least one classmate's post. Full completion is required to earn full credit.

Assignments
For assignments, it is up to you to decide how to share your thoughts. You can submit a more traditional paper (1 - 2 paragraphs), a brief video or audio recording, etc. When a template or document is required, they should be completed per individual instructions. Full completion is required to earn full credit.

Please note: All assignment submissions must be original and created by the submitter specifically for this course. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT and BingAI, may be used on all assignments in this class. You are responsible for the final product submitted, so make sure your submission is accurate and your sources are reliable. If you decide to use AI, please include that information in your submission.

Quizzes
These are designed as knowledge checks. You are welcome to use your notes and/or the module itself while taking the quiz. Each quiz contains 5 questions worth 1 point each.

Office Hours
The course facilitator will be available live each week for questions and support.

Grade Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class. Assignment due dates are designed to help the student with time management. Late assignments will be eligible for full credit when completed prior to the end of course.

Complete	100 % to 80.0%
Incomplete	< 80.0 % to 0.0%

Program Tenets

The Dog Lifesaving Fundamentals course is the first of its kind in the nation that offers university recognition for completion. To ensure the integrity of the experience and program here are the **program tenets**:

- **Participatory** - Your voice and perspective are important, and your full participation will be important for your colleagues. The cohort class is comprised of different personalities and communication styles so it's important to be mindful of making space for all to contribute.
- **Confidentiality** – The DLF is a safe space for sharing and learning and confidentiality is assumed.
- **Transparency** – Transparency is a key to developing trust and accurately assessing areas for improvement and developing effective improvement plans.
- **Trust and respect** – We all come from different backgrounds and various environments which produce a different set of challenges and successes. Trusting that we're all in this together for the greater good and working for the same larger goal will be key. Ensuring we respect each other's voices even if at times we don't always see situations in the same light will make for an invigorating and intellectually stimulating environment.
- **Growth mindset** – Leading change is a theme woven throughout all the modules presented in the DLF and in order to thrive in a program which encourages living a bit outside of your comfort zone, a growth mindset is required.
- **Intellectual curiosity** - Intellectually curious people challenge the status quo to help create new ways to increase lifesaving and meet the expectations of the community. Intellectually curious people are positive risk-takers. They are entrepreneurial, but not rash. They promote experimentation, often testing the boundaries of possibilities without fear of failure.
- **Well-being** – Well-being includes taking care of the whole self – mind, body and spirit. Embodying this concept and modeling balance with how you care for yourself as an animal advocate or professional is important.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. You are expected to have read and understood Policy 6.33 Academic Integrity and the current issue of the student handbook (published by Student Services) regarding student responsibilities and rights.

ADA STATEMENT:

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids will need to contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), in Room 206F of the Sharwan Smith Center or phone (435) 865-8022. SSD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT:

In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the mySUU portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at: https://www.suu.edu/ad/em/.

HEOA COMPLIANCE STATEMENT:

The sharing of copyrighted material through peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing, except as provided under U.S. copyright law, is prohibited by law. Detailed information can be found at: https://www.suu.edu/heoa/index.html.

DISCLAIMER:

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work, and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.