

## Core Areas of Competency

- I. **ASSESSMENT**
  - A. History Taking Skills and History Assessment
    - 1. Eliciting accurate information
    - 2. Interpretation of information provided
    - 3. Assessing owner interpretation of behavioral issues
  - B. Behavioral Observation Skills
    - 1. Accurate observation and interpretation of behaviors demonstrated by the animal
    - 2. Ability to integrate information obtained by direct observation of the animal and the humans involved
  - C. Integration of behavioral, historical, medical and physiologic data
  
- II. **COUNSELING SKILLS AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT**
  - A. Awareness of social structure and proximate environment on animal's behavior
  - B. Ability to assess human attitudes and how these impact the animals behavior and the outcome of the problem
  - C. Ability to asses family's goals and discuss these in non-judgmental manner
  - D. Awareness of human personality types
  - E. Observation and interpretation of human behaviors
  - F. Awareness and ability to utilize human learning styles
  - G. Ability to develop solutions that function for all members involved
  - H. Ability to assist in counseling family members in conflict to arrive at a common goal
  - I. Awareness of ancillary support services
    - 1. Veterinarian
    - 2. Social services
    - 3. Alternative practitioners
    - 4. Psychological counseling
  
- III. **BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE**
  - A. Learning Theory
    - 1. Operant conditioning
    - 2. Classical conditioning
    - 3. Desensitization, counterconditioning
    - 4. Observational learning
    - 5. Habituation, sensitization
    - 6. Latent learning
    - 7. Flooding
  - B. Application -- Training Methods (Definitions, uses/indications, pros/cons, and relationship to types of leaning/learning theory **for each of the five methods below**)
    - 1. Lure/reward
    - 2. Shaping
    - 3. Clicker training

- 4. Prompting
- 5. Compulsion
- C. Evaluation of scientific information and data analysis
- D. Use of scientific data to enhance understanding of behavioral systems
- E. Ability to apply scientific data to behavior modification programs
- F. Ability to collect and utilize data related to modification programs to monitor and improve performance

IV. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

- A. Ethology
- B. Communication behaviors
- C. Genetics
- D. Domestication and evolution
- E. Wild ancestors and the implication for evaluating domestic animal behavior

V. BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

- A. Basic gross anatomy and organ systems
- B. Basic neuroanatomy and neurobiology (as relates to behavioral assessments)
- C. Endocrinology and physiology
- D. General knowledge of psychopharmacological use

VI. SPECIES SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE

- A. Comparative anatomy
- B. Nutrition and diet
- C. Exercise and housing requirements
- D. Environmental enrichment
- E. Breed specific characteristics
- F. Common health issues
- G. Interpretation of body language
- H. Developmental stages
- I. Behavior Problems
  - 1. Separation related problems
  - 2. Aggression
  - 3. Problems related to social signaling
  - 4. Sexual/reproductive
  - 5. Maternal
  - 6. Fears/phobias
  - 7. Anxiety disorders
  - 8. Repetitive behaviors
  - 9. Unruliness
  - 10. Vocalization
  - 11. Ingestive disorders
  - 12. Elimination disorders
  - 13. Destructive behavior
- J. Intervention Strategies
  - 1. Management and safety interventions
  - 2. Behavior modification protocols
  - 3. Knowledge and appropriate use of training equipment
- K. Ability to apply scientific learning theory principles to treatment strategies