Constitution of Veterinary Society of Herpetology

**ARTICLE I. NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

Veterinary Society of Herpetology (VSH)

Student Chapter of Association of Reptile & Amphibian Veterinarians (ARAV)

**ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION**

As outlined in the RSO Classification Policy, Veterinary Society of Herpetology (VSH) is considered a General Registered Student Organization. As a GRSO, our organization is a separate 3rd party entity, not considered a part of the University of Florida. Through registering with the University, our student group agrees to follow its policies and operate on campus with access and/or eligibility for specific campus benefits.

**ARTICLE III. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The goal of Veterinary Society of Herpetology (VSH) is to serve as a UFCVM Club as a GRSO (General Registered Student Organization) dedicated to the branch of veterinary medicine that encompasses reptiles and amphibians. VSH will serve as a way to get students into this aspect of veterinary medicine by meeting other like-minded students and faculty while also meeting other veterinarians in this field around Florida, US, and the World. As exotic as Florida is, Florida serves as one of the biggest states with reptile pet owners. VSH will get students hands on techniques with wet labs and meetings about current reptile/amphibian medicine that is currently being practiced. Attending conferences and seminars will also help broaden future veterinarians what to do if a scaly or slimy friend enters the clinic.

**ARTICLE IV. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT & UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS**

Upon approval by the Department of Student Engagement, Veterinary Society of Herpetology shall be a registered student organization at the University of Florida. Veterinary Society of Herpetology shall comply with all local, state and federal laws, as well as all University of Florida regulations, policies, and procedures. Such compliance includes but is not limited to the University’s regulations related to Non-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment (including sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking), Hazing, Commercial Activity, and Student Leader Eligibility.

Section A. Non-Discrimination

Veterinary Society of Herpetology agrees that it will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act. Discrimination on the basis of the protected classes described in University of Florida Regulation 1.006 (Non-Discrimination/Harassment/Invasion of Privacy Policies) is prohibited.

Section B. Sexual Harassment

Veterinary Society of Herpetology agrees that it will not engage in any activity that is unwelcome conduct of sexual nature that creates a hostile environment. Behaviors that could create a hostile environment include sexual harassment (which could include inappropriate sexual comments), sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking and repeated instances of cyber abuse. Sexual harassment as described in University of Florida Regulation 1.006 (Non-Discrimination/Harassment/Invasion of Privacy Policy) is prohibited.

Section C. Hazing

Veterinary Society of Herpetology agrees that it will not initiate, support, or encourage any events or situations that recklessly, by design, or intentionally endanger the mental or physical health or safety of a student for any purpose including but not limited to initiation or admission into or affiliation with any student group or organization. Hazing as defined in the University of Florida Regulation 1.0081 (Prohibition of Hazing; Procedures and Penalties) and 4.040 (Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code) is prohibited. If found responsible for hazing, sanctions may be imposed against the organization, its leaders and/or members.

Section D. Responsibility to Report

The University of Florida identifies Responsible Employees and Campus Security Authorities to support the health, safety, and wellbeing of campus. If Veterinary Society of Herpetology  becomes aware of any such conduct described in this article, they are encouraged to report it immediately to staff in Student Engagement, the Director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, the University’s Title IX Coordinator, or to their Student Organization Advisor, who are identified as mandated reporters.

Section E. Officer Eligibility

Veterinary Society of Herpetology understands, acknowledges, and agrees to uphold and abide by the specific minimal requirements regarding officer eligibility as defined in the [Registered Student Organization Classification and Officer Eligibility Policy](https://hub.policy.ufl.edu/s/article/RSO-Classification-Officer-Eligibility).

**ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in this organization is open to all enrolled students at the University of Florida. Non-enrolled students, spouses, faculty, and staff are prohibited from holding membership, office or voting powers. All members are free to leave and disassociate without fear of retribution, retaliation, or harassment.

**ARTICLE VI. BYLAWS FOR VETERINARY SOCIETY OF HERPETOLOGY**

Veterinary Society of Herpetology may elect to maintain separate bylaws document to outline the day-to-day operations of the organization and to clarify policies and procedures otherwise not included in the previous articles. Bylaws and/or other guiding documents may not take precedence over the requirements sent forth by local, state, and federal laws, the University of Florida’s regulations, policies, and procedures, and the Student Engagement constitution requirements. Amendments and changes may be made to the bylaws and shall be consistent with the Student Engagement approved constitution on file and Student Engagement’s constitution requirements. Should the organization transition leadership, all bylaws and guiding documents will be transitioned to new student organization leaders and/or advisor(s). Veterinary Society of Herpetology agrees to provide all unaltered bylaws and guiding documents and/or clarify its procedures in writing to any University of Florida student, faculty, or staff upon request.

**ARTICLE VII. STUDENT ORGANIZATION ADVISOR**

Each registered student organization must have an eligible student organization advisor. The student organization advisor must be a full-time, salaried faculty or staff member not on extended leave for 4 consecutive weeks or longer during their advisor term**.** The student organization advisor shall serve as a resource person providing advisory support to officers and members and may not vote or hold office in the organization.The Student Organization Advisor will support the club members in fulfilling the purpose of the club by providing counsel and representing the club to the community as well as to the University of Florida. Officially, the term of the Student Organization Advisor is one year. The Student Organization Advisor is appointed to his/her position every August or May when the class elections take place. If at any time the organization wishes to elect another Student Organization Advisor, the members will vote on a replacement. A 2/3 majority vote is needed for a new advisor to be elected. The Student Organization Advisor should be one whose ideals are aligned with the organization's purpose and is willing to serve as a source of information and advice for the club.

**ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS**

Registered student organizations are required to have a minimum of a President, Treasurer, and Vice President as elected officers. These officers must abide by the [Registered Student Organization Classification and Officer Eligibility Policy](https://hub.policy.ufl.edu/s/article/RSO-Classification-Officer-Eligibility).

The elected officers of Veterinary Society of Herpetology shall be President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. At no time should one person hold more than one of these positions.

Section A: The elected officers shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Any other positions of office may be added to this list as voted on by the student body of Veterinary Society of Herpetology and College of Veterinary Medicine. These additional positions shall be voted on by simple majority hand vote, and at least 2/3 of the members of the class must vote in order for the vote to pass.

 Part 1: The President should preside at all meetings of the organization and shall coordinate the work of officers and committees.

 Part 2: The Vice President should assist the President and serve as the President in his/her absence, and provide support to other elected officers.

 Part 3: The Treasurer shall receive all monies of the Veterinary Society of Herpetology; shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures; shall pay out local funds in accordance with the approved budget as authorized by the organization. The Treasurer shall present a financial statement to the College of Veterinary Medicine each spring.

 Part 4: The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings and attendance of the Veterinary Society of Herpetology and shall perform other duties as delegated.

Part 5: The Wetlab coordinator shall be responsible for the planning, room reservation, supply acquisition and communication with outside resources necessary in order to successfully carry out several herpetology-oriented wet labs each academic year. He/she may also work with the Treasurer to obtain funding for such events and those supplies needed.

Part 6: The Meeting coordinator should communicate with outside resources necessary in order to successfully carry out several herpetology-oriented meetings each academic year. They should make sure the club hosts a meeting at least once per month. They are responsible for sending out emails to the student body when meetings are held. They will fill out the UFCVM application form to get prior approval per UF/UFCVM policy.

Part 7: Social media chair shall develop, implement and maintain all strategic social media communications, public relations, outreach, and event activities and materials. Develop a plan to consistently increase visibility and reputability of the organization. Develop and update an organizational social media presence.

Part 8: Merch chair shall preside over club merchandise creation and distribution. Will coordinate with the treasurer in the collection and use of funds.

Section B: Officers shall be elected in April of the academic year to serve for the following academic year.

Section C: The impeachment of an officer can occur when duties are not being performed in an acceptable manner as decided by the organization and Executive Board. Any officer of may be removed from office through the following process:

Part 1: A written request by at least three voting members of the organization shall be submitted to either the President, Vice President, or Treasurer. Written notification shall be sent to the officer in question asking that officer to be present at the next meeting and prepared to respond to the removal request.

Part 2: A two-thirds majority vote of members present is necessary to remove the officer.

Part 3: In the event of the removal of an officer, a special provision may be granted to the remaining officers to appoint an interim replacement until an election may be held.

Section D: If an officer opts to step down from office, another member of the organization will fill the position as decided by the officers. The class will be asked for nominations to fill the position. A meeting for an election will be held if more than one member of the organization is nominated. A simple majority hand vote will be required to determine the new officer. Notice of the election will be provided to the class via the class listserv email.

**ARTICLES IX. ELECTIONS**

Section A: Elections will be held one time per academic year in April.

Section B: Officers must be a member of the College of Veterinary Medicine to be eligible to be nominated for a position.

Section C: Any member may be nominated by another member of the club, including himself, herself, themselves when nominations for the position have been opened during the election meeting. An additional person must second that nomination.

Section D: If more than one individual is nominated for a position, each individual will stand up and speak. Officers must be elected by simple majority vote by show of hands. All members must be included in the voting. If only one member is nominated, a vote will still take place. At least 1/2 of the members of the class must vote in order for any vote to pass. Only those members who are enrolled in the College of Veterinary Medicine may be considered voting members.

Section E: If there are more than two candidates running and no candidate receives a majority vote, there shall be a run-off vote between the top two vote recipients at the next general meeting.

Section F: Officers will hold office from August to December after 1st year elections. A second election will take place in January of the first year. These officers will hold office from January until May of their freshman year. Thereafter, elections shall only take place once a year in May to fill the positions during second, third, and fourth academic years.

In the absence of clear direction on election, amendment, and /or voting procedures, Veterinary Society of Herpetology agrees to follow the guidance and instruction of Robert's Rules of Order for the election or amendment process.

**ARTICLE X. FINANCE**

As a General Registered Student Organization, Veterinary Society of Herpetology does not receive any funding or resources from other UF Departments or Colleges, rather, this organization is funded by: Dues will not be collected and student government funding will not be used. Any financial gain made by the class will come directly from fundraising efforts made by the fundraising chairs. All members and associate members are invited to participate in fundraising efforts, however participation is voluntary. Funds will help pay for club events and trips.

**ARTICLE XI. DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Upon dissolution, student organizations are prohibited from leaving their organizational assets to any individual or any other student organization. Rather, student organizations may designate a specific charity that will receive such organizational assets. At the time of dissolution, after all outstanding debts are paid, Veterinary Society of Herpetology will leave any assets and outstanding funds to Alachua County Humane Society, a non-profit organization, in the form of a gift.

**ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

Student Engagement has established a process through which constitutions may be amended, reviewed, and approved. Student organizations wishing to amend their constitutions must utilize their constitution on file listed on GatorConnect to make amendments and submit those changes to Student Engagement.

Amendments to this Constitution may be suggested by any member of this organization to any member of the officer board. The officer will then bring it to the attention of the executive board at the next officer meeting. Amendments must have a 2/3 majority vote to pass. Amendments will be made as necessary per the changing needs of the organization. All amended constitutions must immediately be submitted directly to the Department of Student Engagement for review and approval. This constitution and any amendments added will not be in effect until approved by the Department of Student Engagement.

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