

## **MSU-CVM College of Veterinary Medicine Guidelines for Professional Image**

Appropriate student dress is an integral part of professional development. Dress standards contain components relating both to professionalism and practical application. The student in veterinary medicine has the responsibility to adhere to the spirit and specifications of the dress code. Because of the numbers of visitors to the facility, we are provided with an excellent opportunity to create a favorable impression for the profession through our dress and conduct. This document defines standards within the facility to provide guidance to faculty and students.

These guidelines apply during normal business hours, and in any situation not specifically covered under another subheading.

### *1. Classrooms and MDLs during non-laboratory times*

#### **General – Applies to all students**

- MSU-CVM nametags or student IDs are to be worn in the building at all times.
- Visible body piercings other than ears should be covered by clothing or removed.
- Excessive visible tattooing is not acceptable and, when feasible, tattoos should be covered by clothing.
- All clothing is to be in good repair, should fit properly and should not be excessively wrinkled. Clothing should not be provocative. Clothing that reveals excessive cleavage, or the back, chest, stomach, or underwear of the wearer is not appropriate.
- Hair is to be clean and dry and should be professional in appearance.
- Hats or head coverings of any kind are not appropriate (except for head coverings that are required for religious purposes, to honor cultural tradition, for surgery, or for PPE).
- Blouses, collared dress shirts, sweaters, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire. Neckties may be worn with dress shirts but are not mandatory. Inappropriate attire includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with profane or vulgar words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter tops; sweatshirts, hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts, and polo shirts (except under game day dress policy below); and tops with bare shoulders or spaghetti straps, unless\* worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress. (\*Example: spaghetti-strap top worn under an open blouse).
- Dress slacks are acceptable both in full and crop length. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans or denim of any kind (including Carhartt), sweatpants, exercise pants, shorts of any kind, bib overalls, leggings\*, and any spandex or other formfitting pants such as people wear for biking. (\* Exception: leggings worn underneath a dress or skirt)
- Casual dresses and skirts that are split just above, at, or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which the student can sit comfortably in public. Mini-skirts, skorts, sun dresses, peasant dresses/ shirts, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate. Low-cut blouses are unacceptable. Cleavage should also not be visible (front or back) when bending over.
- Walking shoes, loafers, clogs, boots (clean and in good repair; not traditional work boots), leather deck-type shoes, flats, and dress heels are acceptable. Flip-flops, sandals, or slippers are not acceptable. Closed-toe shoes are required in all laboratory and clinical areas. Athletic shoes are unacceptable in the classroom but may be worn in laboratory and clinical settings.
- Laboratory attire is not acceptable in a non-laboratory setting.
- Scrub tops and pants may not be worn into or out of the building as the student is going to or from the laboratory or clinical setting. OSHA regulations require that students **do not enter or exit** the building wearing soiled laboratory attire.
- Game day dress for Phase 1 students is appropriate on Fridays preceding an MSU football game or on the day of a weekday game during football season only. Game day dress is defined as Khakis or nice slacks with an MSU or CVM logoed polo shirt. Shirts without the MSU or CVM logo must be black, maroon, white, or grey. Game day dress is NOT appropriate on days where there are major MSU-CVM meetings (ex: MVMA). This policy does not apply to students in clinical rotations and electives.
- Sweatshirts/ hooded sweatshirts are not appropriate. (exception: MSU or CVM logoed sweatshirt worn over scrubs in the clinical setting).

## *2. MDL Laboratories*

A clean lab coat worn over classroom clothes is acceptable dress unless otherwise stated by the laboratory instructor. Athletic shoes are acceptable in laboratory settings. Students attending laboratories taught in the Animal Health Center should dress according to the standards set forth by the laboratory instructor. OSHA regulations require that students **do not enter** or exit the building wearing laboratory attire. Health and safety concerns dictate that dirty laboratory clothing be bundled for removal from the building.

## *3. The Animal Health Center*

**Faculty and staff should serve as role models for students.**

Students are expected to **enter and leave** the Animal Health Center in dress appropriate for the classroom. Specific dress for selected services is to be determined by the appropriate Service Chiefs and may include athletic shoes and MSU or CVM logoed polo shirts.

## *4. Pegasus Dining Room*

Pertinent health and safety regulations and the principles of hygiene and courtesy to fellow students, faculty, staff, and guests dictate that in most cases laboratory and clinical clothing **not** be worn in the dining area. Students, faculty, and staff should be certain that all exposed clothing is CLEAN. Before entering the Dining Room, students (and faculty and staff) should remove lab coats that have been worn in the clinics.

## *5. Library*

Clothes that meet classroom standards are appropriate dress. Students on anesthesia and surgery rotations may wear clean scrubs covered by a clean smock.

## *6. After Hours, Weekends, and Holidays*

Specific dress for selected services is to be determined by the appropriate Service Chiefs. Any student meeting with a client after-hours is required to dress professionally. First and second-year students entering the building to study or visit the library or MDL areas may dress casually.

## *7. College-Sponsored Meetings*

College-sponsored meetings, whether held during the day or at night, are considered official functions of the College. Classroom dress is required during such meetings unless specifically noted otherwise by the faculty advisor for the event.

## *8. Miscellaneous*

Locker space is available for changing into clothing suitable for jogging or intramural sports. Discretion is advised if a college-sponsored meeting is in progress. If a student must enter the building during business hours for only a "quick errand", that student may be casually dressed, but discretion and expediency are advised.

## **Summary**

It is important that students consider the rationale for the maintenance of professional dress in the veterinary medical profession and the positive impact that professional appearance has on consumers and clients. It is important that we seek to maintain and improve the image of veterinarians. Adherence to the dress guidelines by faculty and students is a small but important mechanism to achieve this goal. Students will be informed when their appearance does not meet MSU-CVM standards. The lack of professional dress on the second occasion will be treated as a breach of the student code of conduct.