

Service Dog & Canine Studies Management



Credential: Diploma Duration: 2 years Intake: Fall Campus: Medicine Hat

The Service Dog and Canine Studies Management Diploma provides students with both a practical and a theory-based education. The program runs for 18 consecutive months, consisting of four semesters of in-class learning and culminating in an 8-week work term in the final semester. During their first four semesters, students work together and share responsibilities of housing, training, and caring for a group of young service dogs in training for 14 months. Partnering with Canadian service dog organizations, Medicine Hat College provides puppies for student's experiential learning. Working in groups, students raise the dogs through puppyhood and adolescence, after which the dogs return to organizations for further training before being placed with clients.

The program delves into the use of service dogs to alleviate symptoms of disabilities, outlining the use of and training for hearing, diabetes alert, seizure response, autism assistance, mobility assistance, PTSD, and psychiatric service dogs. Students develop effective and ethical training skills for both canines and humans, emphasizing group work, critical thinking, and empathetic coaching and communication. The curriculum includes studying animal behavior, canine learning theory, and dog training methods supported by leading professionals and governing bodies internationally, including the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association.

Students gain hands-on experience in lab classes, practicing positive reinforcement training skills with the program's service dogs in training. Business courses in communication, marketing, management, and accounting prepare students for entrepreneurial opportunities. Graduates are equipped for careers such as service dog trainer apprentice, pet dog trainer, kennel manager, and roles in animal shelters. Work-integrated learning opportunities include placements in service dog organizations, shelters, kennels, and other canine-related settings, providing valuable professional experience.

This program is ideal for those who enjoy working with animals and helping people. Join this growing industry and contribute to the world of service dogs.

Admission Requirements:

- **ELA 30-1 or ELA 30-2**
- **Science 30 or Biology 20**
- **One 30-level, 5 credit subject with 50% or better**

Pre-Program Requirements

Prior to the first day of classes, students are asked to submit a current Police Information Check (PIC). In order to be considered 'current', the PIC must be completed during the three months prior to admission (i.e. June 1 – August 31 for Fall admission). Students are obligated to inform the Program Coordinator immediately of any change in the status of their criminal record.

Computer Competency

Many of the courses in this program require a level of familiarity and competency with Microsoft Office suite of computer software. You are advised to enroll in an introductory computer class which includes instruction in commercial business software such as Microsoft Office before beginning this program if your computer skills are limited.