VSA Dog Trainer Course
Student Final Assessment Video Submission Instructions

As part of the final examination and assessment process for students in VSA's Dog Trainer Course, students must submit video examples of their work training dogs and teaching humans. These video submissions comprise 35% of your final exams grade. Please refer to the instructions and grading keys in this document when preparing and delivering your video submission. If you have any questions about the video submission process, please contact VSA.

Students are required to submit four (4) videos:

- **Video 1 – Group Class**
- **Video 2 – Private Lesson**
- **Video 3 – Teaching a behavior with capturing and/or shaping**
- **Video 4 – Teaching a behavior with targeting and/or luring**

Technical Requirements

All videos should be submitted by using the DTC Video Submission Form on the VSA website to provide the full URL of each of the required videos. Each required video should have its own YouTube URL (do not combine all of the required videos into one large file) and should be designated as an 'Unlisted' video on the student's YouTube channel which was set up before or during the course curriculum.

Videos should adhere to the following requirements:

- The duration of each video should fall within the requested time ranges for each video type (see below).
- Title each video within YouTube using the following format: "VIDEO #[x] – STUDENTFIRSTNAME STUDENTLASTNAME – DTC[xxxx]"
    - The 'x' following the "VIDEO #" represents the video number from this document.
    - The x's following 'DTC' represent YYMM of the student's course start date. For example, if the course start date was February 2016, the format would be DTC1602.
- Videos should be continuous footage – no editing. Each required video should be uploaded in its entirety without alteration. The only allowable exceptions are edits:
    - to adjust brightness, contrast, audio levels, etc.).
    - to the beginning and/or end points, e.g., if you video tape an entire group class, but want to submit 15 minutes at the beginning of the video.
- Videos should be well lit so that all subjects are clearly visible.
- Videos should be framed to include a full body-length, panoramic shot of the student, dog and human client(s) where appropriate. Unless specifically mentioned in a video's individual requirements, make the shot wide – no close-ups if it means cropping out one of the subjects.
- Videos should include good-quality, completely audible audio. Avoid any wind noise or excessive background noise (barking, street noise, etc.).

Any submitted videos which do not meet these standards will result in delays and the possibility that the student may need to re-shoot some or all of the videos.

What to Use to Shoot and Upload Videos

Most modern camera phones and some tablets are capable of shooting high-enough quality audio and video for your submission. In some cases, the lighting and/or audio quality may need to be adjusted when using mobile devices, so if you're shooting with your phone, be sure to take some test footage before beginning your actual videos.

It is not necessary nor recommended that students hire a professional videographer to shoot these videos. A family member, friend, co-worker or mentor with a steady hand (or – even better – a tripod) will be capable of producing high-enough quality video for VSA's purposes.

You are also welcome to use a video camera or standard photographic camera. Most modern photo cameras have good-to-excellent video capabilities. Just be sure that the internal microphone on your device is sufficient to record good quality audio in the environment where you'll be shooting. If it's not, you can either upgrade your audio equipment (buying or borrowing a device-friendly 'shotgun mic') or change the shooting location to somewhere more conducive.

Once you have captured the video on a hard drive, you are welcome (but not required) to edit the beginning and end points of each video using free and user-friendly editing software (Windows MovieMaker, iMovie, etc.). Do not make any internal edits to the footage – just clip the beginning and end points if you do any editing at all. Some mobile devices have the capability of doing this type of light editing on the device – sometimes it may be easier to transfer the video files to a computer to edit. Again – editing is not required.

How to Transfer Video Files from a Mobile Device:

- iPhone: https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201302
- Android: https://support.google.com/nexus/answer/2840804?hl=en
- Video camera or camera: follow your camera instructions (usually involves inserting your camera's memory card into your computer and copying/pasting the video files to your computer hard drive).

How to Upload Files to YouTube:

- https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57407?hl=en

Most mobile devices and camera/video cameras will shoot in video formats that are easily recognized by YouTube when uploading. If you haven't done so previously, it is recommended that you shoot test footage on the device you will be using and attempt to upload the footage to your YouTube channel to ensure compatibility.

By default, all YouTube channels allow users to upload videos up to 15 minutes in duration. Your submitted videos should all be 15 minutes or less, but in the event you need to upload something slightly longer, instructions for how to raise the duration limit on your account can be found here: https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/71673?hl=en.

Grading

Each video will be assessed by VSA and assigned a grade based on the grading keys detailed for each required submission type. The individual grades for all submitted videos will be averaged to determine your overall video submission grade, which represents 40% of your total Final Assessment grade.

 In order to pass the video submission portion of the Final Assessment:

- Each individual video must result in a score of 70% or higher.
- The cumulative average of all of the submitted videos must be at least 80%.

In the event your video submissions fail to achieve the minimum required grades to result in a passing score, you will be notified of the need to re-submit new videos. This resubmission process is a one-time extension of the Final Assessment process. Note that in certain cases where video submissions are inaudible and/or logistically incorrect, VSA may ask for a resubmission which will not count as your official one-time resubmission. This will not be counted against you in your final grade.

How to Submit Videos to VSA

Students should use the DTC Video Submission Form page on the VSA website to submit all videos at one time. Each video should be individually submitted via the online form – do not combine videos into one longer video. Ensure that the videos are titled correctly within YouTube as described in the Technical Requirements section of this document.

Click here to open the DTC Video Submission Form page.

You will receive notification via reply email that VSA has received your video submissions. Final grading and notification will occur between 2-3 weeks after receipt of your videos. You may submit your videos prior to the Final Exam and Assessment module, however all videos must be submitted in one email and early submissions will be counted as the first of the two allowed submissions regardless of content.

Video Creation Tips

- Take some test footage in the real environment in which you'll be shooting so that you can watch and listen to it in order to ensure that both the video and audio quality is high enough quality.
- When possible, use a tripod or fixed camera position to ensure camera stability.
- If possible, try and enlist a friend to 'man' the camera, even if it's a static (unmoving) shot on a tripod. This will ensure that someone is available to monitor the camera in the event of battery failure, full hard drive, a jostled camera, etc.
- Make sure your camera's hard drive has enough storage to capture all of the necessary footage prior to shooting.
- Make sure your camera has enough battery power to last as long as you're filming.
- Make sure your audio is audible. Even when you feel like you're speaking quite loudly, ambient noise, the direction of the camera's microphone, or your proximity to the camera can make hearing you quite difficult. Without good audio, many videos become very limited in terms of their usefulness both to you and others.
- If you're shooting outdoors, be especially aware of ambient noise (birds, traffic, people talking, dogs barking, etc). Many modern built-in microphones are sensitive to the filming environment, and if they 'hear' primarily ambient noise, they will feature that noise more prominently even though that's not what it sounds like to your ears.
- Stay in the frame. If your camera is in a set position, be aware of where the limits of the camera frame are and try to stay within those limits. If necessary, it can be helpful to mark areas on the ground that designate which areas are off-camera.

Individual Video Requirements:

Video 1 – Group Class
Duration: up to 10-15 minutes

This video will show you teaching a group class with at least three (3) handler/dog teams. The class can be comprised of pet owners, e.g., arranged by your mentor or another dog training professional, or can be a mock group class comprised of friends and/or family members and their dogs.

The video must contain the following continuous footage:

- A 'welcome' moment when you initiate either the beginning of the class, or the beginning of the exercise, and introduce the lesson plan and goals.
- You teaching the dog/handler teams a new behavior or exercise for them to practice with their dogs.
- You demonstrating the behavior or exercise with a live dog in front of the class.
- You getting the class members started on the exercise and then circulating and providing help and feedback individually.

Grading Keys:

- Student effectively manages the classroom setting to ensure the safety and comfort of humans and dogs.
- Student communicates key concepts confidently and effectively with the class.
- Student successfully defines and follows through on parameters for the class to ask questions.
- Student's voice is loud enough to be heard clearly by all members of the class.
- Student clearly explains and then demonstrates the behavior or exercise with the class, including:
    - Pre-training discussion about why this behavior is important and how it can be used.
    - Pre-training description of how the training of the behavior will begin and how it will progress (setting goals and expectations).
    - Actual demonstration with a dog.
- Student shows adaptability with and/or empathy for both human and canine clients. Student effectively handles when things don't go smoothly while training and re-direct both human and canine client back onto an effective training path (if applicable).
- Student provides effective guidance, constructive support, and reinforcement to clients.
- Student moves effectively throughout the classroom to ensure coverage of all clients.

Video #2 – Private Lesson
Duration: up to 10-15 minutes

This video will show you conducting a private lesson with a human client and their dog. The handler/dog team can be an actual client, e.g. arranged by your mentor or another dog training professional, or a mock private training session, e.g., with your mentor, a friend or family member with their dog.

The video must contain the following continuous footage:

- You addressing a common dog behavior problem reported by the human client, e.g., jumping, barking, inappropriate door-greeting, chewing, nipping, etc. Note: Housetraining should not be the problem addressed for this video, as its training protocol cannot be demonstrated within the 10-15 minute required video duration.
- You explaining and/or demonstrating training protocols to manage the problem behavior with the client's dog.
- You instructing the human client how to manage the dog's behavior, including overseeing the active management and training of the dog.
- You demonstrating a new behavior, if implemented, as part of the behavior problem solution.

Grading Keys:

- Student communicates key concepts confidently and effectively.
- Student successfully creates an environment conducive to appropriate question-asking and interaction.
- Student maintains a high level of professionalism at all times, including:
    - Appropriate and professional dress
    - Courteous and consistent communication skills
    - Respectful demeanor and behavior towards human client(s), property and pets
    - Mindful of safety for all parties (human client, canine client, self)
- Student displays a confident grasp of all necessary training and behavior concepts and skills.
- Student clearly communicates management strategies regarding problem behavior.
- Student confidently demonstrates all relevant training skills to both humans and dogs.
- Student correctly identifies the most appropriate time to have humans begin working with their dogs.
- Student provides effective guidance, constructive support, and reinforcement for human clients once they begin actively working with their dogs.

Videos 3 and 4 – Teaching Behaviors

In these videos, you'll choose two behaviors from the VSA Basic Manners Curriculum to teach to a dog. You can work with the same dog for both videos, or two different dogs. You can train a dog that you know from working with mentor and/or at a shelter, or you can choose to train your own dog. Note: The dog you choose must not have previously learned the behavior (or any behaviors closely associated with) the behavior you choose.

NOTE: If the dog already knows a specific targeting cue, do not use targeting (even of a different object) as the behavior to teach for these videos. In other word, if the dog knows how to target a post-it note, don't teach a similar 'target my hand' cue for these videos.

Video should show only you and the dog – no other humans should be involved in the training session.

You should narrate what you're doing and why as you progress through the training session.

Video 3 – Teaching Behavior #1 with capturing and/or shaping and a marker
Duration: up to 5 minutes

For Video 3, choose a behavior to teach using the training techniques of capturing and/or shaping, and include the use of a marker. At the end of the training session, briefly describe the progress you made toward the goal behavior. If the behavior needs further training, explain the additional steps in the training plan that are necessary to teach the goal behavior.

Video 4 – Teaching Behavior #2 with targeting and/or luring.
Duration: up to 5 minutes

For Video 4, choose a behavior to teach using the training techniques of targeting and/or luring, and include the use of a marker. Demonstrate and/or explain how you plan to fade the target or lure as you progress toward the goal behavior. At the end of the training session, briefly describe the progress you made toward the goal behavior. If the behavior needs further training, explain the additional steps in the training plan that are necessary to teach the goal behavior.

Grading Keys for Videos 3 and 4:

- Student creates a comfortable, workable training environment for the dog.
- Student displays thorough understanding of positive training philosophies.
- Student uses only positive training methods with dog.
- Student demonstrates relationship-building skills in addition to active behavior training.
- Student remains observant of the dog at all times and makes adjustments as needed during training to keep the dog comfortable and engaged.
- Student begins the process of introducing the cue to the behavior. If the training sessions does not progress to the point of introducing a cue, the student identifies what the cue will be for the behavior and at what point in training it will be introduced.
- Student displays understanding of and proficiency at multiple positive training styles (capturing behavior, luring, shaping, etc.).