

Practicum Level Descriptions

Summer 2022

English Beginner: Hunt seat equitation is ridden in a forward seat with an English saddle. For those who have never ridden before or have very limited riding experience, less than 3 months. Riders will learn how to groom, tack, and mount horse. Walking, steering, and equitation exercises to strengthen leg position. Trot work securing posting and diagonals, sitting trot, and jumping position.

Western Beginner: Western riding teaches riders concepts of neck reining and is ridden in a saddle with a horn. For those who have never ridden before or have very limited riding experience, less than 3 months. Riders will learn how to groom, tack, and mount horse. Walking, steering, and equitation exercises to strengthen leg position. Jog work, both sitting and posting.

Western Intermediate: For riders who have experience at the lope. This group is for riders that want to work on improving position and control. Exercises that will be worked on are transitions, lateral work, arena figures, no stirrup work and obstacles.

Advanced Beginner: For riders that have little experience in the canter and are ready to start developing canter work. Riders must know diagonals and have a secure lower leg position. This group will work on arena figures, poll work, and lunge lessons.

Intermediate 1: Can walk, trot, and canter safely in a group, knows leads and diagonals, ready to start jumping. Riders will work on jumping position, sitting trot, transitions, no stirrup work, lunge line lessons, and cross rails.

Intermediate 2: Riders have experience with course work and have solid jumping fundamentals, jumping at least 2'3". This group is for riders that want to become more competitive in the show ring and work on seeing distances and equitation. Lesson will include no stirrup work, lunge line lessons, gymnastics, jumping courses, switching horses, and trail obstacles.

Advanced: Riders with experience course work at 2'9". Will be becoming familiar with complicated courses with a higher level of difficulty and sophistication. Ability to ride green horses and jump without stirrups. Working to further develop finesse and control of the horse. Lessons will include no-stirrup work, transitions, lateral work, lunge line lessons, gymnastics, courses, and trail obstacles.

Dressage Lower Level: Riders should be confident at the walk and trot, working towards confidence in the canter. The rider will be introduced to the sport of dressage, dressage terminology and theory. Beginning concepts of connection and balance with an emphasis on equitation. Instruction includes lunge lessons, arena figures, transitions, and introduction of lateral work. Students ride introductory-level tests to improve their accuracy and skills.

Dressage Upper Level: Riders should be confident at the walk, trot and canter. Training level concepts of suppleness, connection, balance and rhythm. Instruction includes refinement of the dressage seat, basic gaits and paces within the gaits, transitions, arena figures, simple changes through the trot, turn on the forehands and leg yields, and cavaletti. Students ride training level tests to improve their accuracy and skills.

First Level Dressage: Riders must be confident in all gaits, be able to ride with an independent seat, and working towards a consistent contact with the bit. Instruction on a greater degree of thoroughness and a more consistent contact with the bit. The refinement of the dressage seat, effective aids and harmony with the horse are emphasized. Leg yields and 10- and 15-meter circles, trot and canter lengthening, cavaletti are used to improve rider and horse's development. Students ride first level tests to improve their accuracy and skills.

Introduction to Classical In Hand work: This course is designed to introduce the student to unmounted training techniques used in classical dressage. Unmounted work helps the student and horse develop a better balance, connection, focus and understanding of the aids needed in mounted work to achieve a true partnership and light aids. All work will be unmounted in either a cavesson or bridle only. Transitions, ring figures and basic lateral movements will be done at the walk and basic trot work in hand introduced. Students will learn how to influence the horse's balance and recognize the proper timing of aids. Must be confident in handling and tacking horses. Open to all riding levels.

Polo Fundamentals I: For riders at an Advanced Beginner Level or above who can maintain control of their horse at the walk and trot and knows their diagonals. This class focuses on the introduction to fundamental polo skills.

Polo Fundamentals II: For riders at an Intermediate and Advanced Level who can maintain control of their horse at the walk, trot and canter. This class focuses on applying fundamental polo skills into a game setting.

Trail: For riders at an Intermediate level or above who can maintain control of their horse at the walk, trot and canter. Riders must be able to mount their horse independently. This class focuses on fundamental trail skills and will be riding in the UConn forest.