

PRE-VETERINARY RESOURCES

When considering veterinary school, you should remember that it is becoming an increasingly competitive field. In fact there is only 1 program in the state of Georgia, located at the **University of Georgia**. The following are considerations for students looking to apply to UGA:

- UGA **does not accept online prerequisite science courses** as meeting criteria for the program. See the “**University of Georgia’s DVM Application and Requirements**” page to see the full list of accepted courses
- No less than **250 hours of veterinary experience** that is to be finished at the time application submission. In addition, this experience **must be with the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian**.
- The **GRE is required** but students no longer need to take the Biology Subject Test. While there are no set parameters of minimum scores, the average scores of accepted applicants are **310 combined Verbal and Quantitative and 4.0 on Analytical Writing**.

You can view each college of veterinary medicine in the U.S. and their average admission requirements and acceptance data through the [Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges - AAVMC](#). See the [College Descriptor Pages](#).

Applications will be submitted through the [Veterinary Medical College Application Service - VMCAS](#)

PREREQUISITE COURSES

Most common **prerequisite courses**:

English Composition I & II – ENGL 1101 & 1102

Principles of Biology I & II – BIOL 1107/L & 1108/L

Principles of Chemistry I & II – CHEM 1211/L & 1212/L

Organic Chemistry I & II – CHEM 3361/L & 3362/L

Biochemistry – CHEM 3510

Introductory Physics I & II – PHYS 1111/L & 1112/L

*Social Sciences & Humanities courses (approximately 14 hours) such as Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, History, Government, Economics, Foreign Languages, or Fine Arts

*At least 8 hours of advanced (3000/4000 level) Biology courses (listed below)

Other **highly suggested courses** are:

Cellular and Molecular Physiology – BIOL 3200

Comparative Vertebrae Anatomy – BIOL 4450

Molecular Biology – BIOL 4195

Parasitology – BIOL 4420

Medical Microbiology – BIOL 4185

Virology – BIOL 4160

Genetics – BIOL 2100

GRE PREPARATION

Most veterinary programs require perspective students to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), and some will accept the MCAT in place of the GRE. It is important that you thoroughly read each school’s website to ensure that you have followed their procedure and that you meet their specific qualifications. The GRE is made up of **3 sections including: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing**. You can register for the GRE [here](#). It is highly suggested that you spend time prior to your test date familiarizing yourself with the types of questions in each section, which you can do through taking a course with a company like Kaplan or Princeton Review, or you can buy study books online that contain practice tests and examples. Applications should be submitted during the summer between junior and senior year, so be sure to take the test in enough time to make the deadlines.

PERSONAL STATEMENT WRITING & SECONDARY APPLICATIONS

The VMCAS requires students to answer **3 essay prompts** as the personal statement portion. The questions are:

- **“There are many career choices within the veterinary profession. What are your future career goals and why? (2,000 character limit)”**
- **In what ways do veterinarians contribute to society and what do you hope to contribute? (2,000 character limit)”**
- **“Consider the breadth of society which veterinarians serve. What attributes do you believe are essential to be successful within the veterinary profession? Of these attributes, which do you possess and how have you demonstrated these in the past? (2,000 character limit)”**

It is important to **remain general** when answering these questions. Your answers will be sent to each of the programs that you are applying to and you want to be sure that your answers can apply to each program. In addition, **character count includes spaces and punctuation** and your essays will not be saved in the VMCAS application if you exceed the count. If a school requires you to submit a **secondary or supplemental application**, they will send you the information needed after receiving your VMCAS application. It is important to thoroughly read the requirements for each school because the policies and procedures vary.

OBTAINING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION OR “EVALUATIONS”

VMCAS refers to recommendation letters as evaluations on the application system. Schools require letters from: 1) veterinarians with whom you have worked or volunteered, 2) a college professor who has taught you in a classroom setting and has given you a letter grade, and 3) an employer/supervisor. The VMCAS has an online letter service (eLOR) that will prompt you to provide the evaluator’s e-mail addresses and have them submit their letters to VMCAS online. Once complete, the VMCAS will send your letters to the individual schools to which you are applying.

Developing **meaningful relationships with faculty is vital** when seeking letters of recommendation. Begin thinking about faculty who you have or will have taken several classes with and you feel a connection to, so that you can begin building those relationships from day 1. Remember that a person’s title is not near as important as how well they know you as a student and as a person. With evaluations, quality highly outweighs quantity. Having 3 strong letters will look better than having 5 letters with little context or detail. **It is ideal to get at least 1 letter from a veterinarian whom you have shadowed or worked closely with, and at least 1 from a science faculty member.** Also, be sure to check your schools’ requirements, particularly concerning whether or not they take composite and/or committee evaluations.

When asking for letters, remember to be gracious and *ask* for the letter. “Would you be willing to,” is usually a good way to start the conversation rather than demanding that they write you a letter. Faculty expect you to ask, and they will most likely agree as long as they feel comfortable speaking on your behalf. Be sure to give the faculty member, veterinarian, or whomever you plan to ask plenty of notice, generally a month is suggested. Providing a resume, CV, personal statement, or some other document will show that you are serious about obtaining a letter and give the faculty member some reference as to what you want them to talk about. **ALWAYS REMEMBER TO THANK YOUR REFERENCES!**

INTERVIEWING PREPARATION

When preparing for professional school interviews, a lot of the same rules apply as with most job interviews. Remember to dress according to interview etiquette and conduct yourself in a professional manner. On Handshake, you can view the Career Center’s “Dress for Success” handouts by clicking on the *Resources* tab. In addition, you want to be sure that you practice ahead of time. “Why do you want to be a veterinarian?” or “Why our program?” are common types of questions that you want to be sure and prepare for. There are different types of interviews such as traditional interviews, video interviews, multiple mini interviews (MMI), among others. MMIs are becoming increasingly popular and stray from the traditional interview set-up. Learn more about MMIs and how to prepare for them [here](#). To become more familiar with interview types and preparation, make an appointment with a pre-professional advisor.

Also, you will want to prepare your own questions to ask. Much like job interviews, you are interviewing the school and program just like they are interviewing you. Finding a good fit is important for you to thrive in a program. Once the interview is over, it is always a good idea to write thank you notes. These can be via email or hand written. Making it to the interview stage is a huge feat, so you want to make sure that you make the best impression!

MAJORING IN SOMETHING OTHER THAN SCIENCE?

You do not need to have a degree in a science discipline to go to veterinarian school! This is a misconception that many have about the majority of health professions. Professional programs are seeking out students that will bring a different perspective to their program, and a major other than a STEM field could help you stand out. However, you must consider the required prerequisites that will need to be worked into the curriculum of your chosen major. Also, consider seeking out additional challenging science or medical related courses as electives to make yourself a well-rounded candidate. But be sure to consult with your academic advisor before choosing courses!

TIMELINE

Year 1	Meet with a pre-professional advisor to start building your timeline and to explore options and opportunities available to you.	Use the Learning Center for Supplemental Instruction to maintain a strong GPA from day 1 <i>especially in science courses!</i>	Register for professional memberships and newsletters to stay up to date on events and information.	Explore professional healthcare careers using Focus2 and Occupational Outlook Handbook, as well as attending the Graduate & Professional School Fair.
Summer 1	<p><i>*Work with the Career Center to start building your resume or CV to prepare your applications for summer experiences*</i></p> <p>Volunteer at local animal hospitals or with veterinarians and keep a journal about your experiences. Other summer experiences could include: research with a faculty member, summer enrichment programs, participate on campus with community science education programs for youth or volunteer at an animal shelter, or wildlife refuge.</p>			
Year 2	Assess academic standing and plans for completing prerequisite courses with Academic Advisor.	Identify and connect with faculty for mentorship, research opportunities, and professional advice.	Seek out campus leadership opportunities.	Continue gaining experience in your field as mentioned above. Attend the Graduate & Professional School Fair to continue growing your network and knowledge of programs available.
Summer 2	<p><i>*Work with a pre-professional advisor to begin looking at schools/programs of interest and choose several*</i></p> <p>Start familiarizing yourself with the GRE and the veterinarian school application process available through the AAVMC Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS). Continue to gain meaningful shadowing and volunteer hours. Create a budget that will include the GRE, test preparation, and application fees for each program of interest including secondary application fees.</p>			
Year 3	Begin preparing for the GRE by registering for a course with companies such as ETS, Princeton Review, Kaplan, etc. and choose test date by the start of second semester.	Consider what faculty, advisors, and mentors could potentially write your letters of recommendation and consult with them so that you can include their names on your applications.	Take the GRE in early summer if possible and plan to have your final GRE score available in the spring and be ready to start applying if you are not taking a gap year.	Discuss alternatives with your pre-professional advisor in case of needed gap year or change in career plans. Attend the Graduate & Professional School Fair to explore your options.
Summer 3	<p>The VMCAS application opens in mid-May and closes early-September, so you'll want to complete and submit your VMCAS application and any secondary application requirements. Continue involvement, research, and/or meaningful volunteering and shadowing that can be added to your experiences when applying. Keep regular contact with your pre-professional advisor to fine tune your application strategy, schools of interest, personal statement, and create your VMCAS account.</p>			
Year 4	Prepare with the Career Center for different types of interviews.	Complete secondary applications/essays as requested.	Evaluate acceptance offers and talk with your pre-professional advisor for guidance.	Consider if a gap year would be in your best interest to acquire the needed shadowing or volunteer hours, practical experiences, or prerequisites