



First-, second- and third-year students learn pathology, microbiology and other fundamentals of the curriculum in a new multipurpose teaching building.

## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What criteria does the Admissions Committee use to select applicants admitted to the DVM program?

The Admissions Committee uses a three-part evaluation process: 1) Academic factors (50–60 percent)—objective evaluation of grade point averages and Graduate Record Examination scores; 2) Non-academic factors (approximately 30 percent)—subjective review of personal attributes, veterinary experience, understanding and dedication to the veterinary profession, motivation to become a veterinarian, extracurricular activities, and educational quality, letters of evaluation; and 3) Interview (5–20 percent).

### 2. How can I make myself a competitive applicant?

The selection process is designed to admit the most qualified students—those who can succeed academically in the rigorous four-year professional science curriculum and demonstrate both commitment to and unquestionable understanding of the veterinary profession.

Academic ability is essential. The evaluation process is detailed and complex to ensure that the Admissions Committee selects applicants with demonstrated academic achievement and the highest potential for successful completion of the DVM program.

#### *Academic performance is the major factor in admission selection.*

Currently, 50–60 percent of the decision to accept an applicant to the DVM program is based on academics consisting of grade point averages (GPAs) and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. Combined, GPAs and GRE scores are the best predictors of how successfully an applicant will complete the veterinary curriculum. The majority of our students have earned GPAs of 3.4–3.6 in their cumulative college course work, their last 68 quarter units (45 semester units), and their required science courses. Average GRE scores for admitted students are in the 70th percentile. Because GPAs and GRE scores are weighted equally in the admissions process, a below-average GPA may be balanced by GRE scores that are above average. Conversely, GRE scores that are below average may be balanced by higher-than-average GPAs.

In addition to academic achievement, approximately 30 percent of the selection process is based on your veterinary experience, understanding of the veterinary profession, motivation and dedication to a career in veterinary medicine, potential to be an outstanding veterinary professional, maturity, extracurricular activities, career diversity and educational quality.

The Admissions Committee evaluates these attributes through a personal statement, letters of evaluation, and documented veterinary or other related experience.

If you are selected for an interview based on these academic and non-academic factors, up to 20 percent of the application evaluation is based on your interview score.

### 3. What should I do to enhance or improve my application?

Study hard, perform well academically, and take high quality courses. Obtain high (70th percentile or higher) scores on the GRE. Gain as much veterinary experience as you can, especially in your area of interest in veterinary medicine, so that you can show a clear understanding of the veterinary profession. In addition, give your potential evaluator(s) ample opportunity to observe you in a clinical setting so that they can provide thorough letters of evaluation on your behalf. Acquire diverse veterinary experiences working with a variety of animal species (small and large) to broaden your knowledge of the many aspects of veterinary medicine.

### 4. What are the academic course requirements for admission to veterinary school?

You must complete a minimum of 108 quarter units or 72 semester units of course work at an accredited college or university. This course work must include 12 quarter units of required English; 12 quarter units of required humanities/social sciences; 4 quarter units of required statistics; and all required science courses. Courses do not have the same unit values at every college; therefore, be sure to compare course content in school catalogs to determine the equivalent courses. Check the articulation agreements on the ASSIST Web site ([www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)) for required science courses taken at California public colleges.

### **5. How do I know my college courses satisfy course requirements for veterinary school?**

If you are taking science courses at California public colleges, refer to the ASSIST Web site ([www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)) to review articulation information for your science courses. To produce an articulation agreement, select UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, then select your college. The courses named under your college will satisfy our required science courses. If you are taking the required science courses at a private college or at a school outside California and you are unsure if they meet our requirements, you may send us copies of the course descriptions and we will review them for you. We do not have articulation agreements for statistics, English, or humanities/social science courses. We will accept ANY course in statistics (business, medical, psychology, etc.). ANY courses considered humanities/social sciences are acceptable. The English requirement must be met by taking at least one quarter/semester of English composition and ANY additional courses in English, speech, classics, rhetoric, linguistics, etc. You do not need to request an articulation evaluation for non-science courses.

### **6. I took courses on the semester system and UC Davis is on the quarter system. How do I know I have completed the correct number of units?**

To convert semester units to quarter units, multiply the number of semester units by 1.5. The converted units may not exactly match the number of quarter units listed for the required science courses; therefore, always review articulation agreements on the ASSIST Web site ([www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)) to be sure that you are taking equivalent courses.

### **7. Does it matter how long ago the required course work was taken?**

No, there is no specific time limit on acceptance of required courses; they count regardless of how long ago they were completed. However, you may choose to retake a course to better understand the subject. Grades for courses that have been retaken will be averaged in your cumulative GPA.

### **8. Can required science courses be repeated for a higher grade?**

Required science courses may be repeated only when the original grade was below a C-. The repeated grade will replace the original grade up to eight quarter units. Repeated units in excess of eight will be averaged with the original graded units. Repeated courses where the original grade received was a C- or better will be averaged in the cumulative GPA.

### **9. Are my chances of admission to the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine better if I attend UC Davis as an undergraduate and/or take required science courses there?**

No. You may attend any accredited college or university. We do not have preferred schools from which we select applicants. We do, however, consider the overall educational quality of your college experience, including the length of time it took for you to complete a degree program; your course load (full time vs. part time); continuity of the program; challenge of the curriculum; employment during education; and so forth.

### **10. Does it matter where I attend college as an undergraduate?**

No. Attend a college that provides a challenging curriculum in an environment where you will succeed academically. Consider schools that offer strong science programs and majors that interest you. Consider also the location and size of the school, extracurricular activities, cost of attendance, etc., and decide which school best suits your needs.

### **11. May I complete some of my courses at a community college?**

Yes. Lower-division required science courses (general biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry and general physics), statistics, humanities/social sciences, and required English course work may be completed at a community college. ALL upper-division course work (biochemistry, genetics, and physiology) MUST BE TAKEN at a four-year school. If you plan to transfer to UC Davis to complete the remaining pre-veterinary requirements while pursuing a bachelor's degree, contact the UC Davis Undergraduate Admissions Office or speak with a counselor at your current college.



Veterinarians from the Wildlife Health Center and Oiled Wildlife Care Network repair the wing of an injured night heron. The center carries out studies of individual and population health, such as pumas in Southern California and the health of the Puget Sound area. The network responds with rescue and rehabilitation when animals are the victims of oil spills.

## **12. What should I choose as an undergraduate major?**

You may study or possess a degree in any major provided the pre-requisite courses are taken. However, if you take the majority of your course work in the sciences, you may be better prepared for the veterinary curriculum. Since many students will not be accepted to veterinary school due to limited space available, you should be prepared to pursue an alternate career goal and should seek a bachelor's degree rather than simply taking pre-veterinary study courses. Most students accepted to our program pursue studies in the life or health sciences. Biology, animal science, zoology and chemistry are the most common majors.

## **13. Must I complete all requirements before I submit an application?**

No. However, the majority of your required science course work must be completed by the time you apply so that we can appropriately evaluate your Required Science Grade Point Average. You must complete all required course work before matriculation in the DVM program. Grades for course work completed after you have submitted your application (i.e., fall term) will not be used to calculate your GPAs for that application cycle. You must meet all pre-professional requirements regardless of undergraduate or graduate degrees you may hold.

## **14. Is it advantageous to take science courses beyond the required course work?**

On a personal level, additional courses in the sciences may be beneficial in preparing for the veterinary curriculum. Extra consideration is not given for extra course work.

## **15. Can Advanced Placement (AP) credit be used to fulfill the prerequisite courses?**

Yes. Advanced Placement credit may be used to fulfill lower-division required courses. The course subject and units must appear on your college transcript in order to receive credit for AP courses.

## **16. May I take courses pass/fail?**

Grade point averages are very important in the evaluation process. Avoid the pass/fail grading option, particularly in the required sciences.

## **17. Is a bachelor's degree required for admission to veterinary school?**

No. You must complete 108 quarter units (72 semester units) at an accredited college before you enter the DVM program. This course work must include 51 quarter units of required sciences; 12 quarter units of required English; 12 quarter units of required humanities/social sciences; and 4 quarter units of required statistics. The majority of students entering our program have completed three or more years of pre-professional course work or possess a degree at matriculation. Applicants with degrees do not receive preference over those who have not completed degrees.

## **18. I'm a non-traditional and/or older student and veterinary medicine is a second career. What steps should I take to pursue my new career choice?**

Start by making sure veterinary medicine is right for you. Get experience working/volunteering with a veterinarian to gain hands-on experience and confirm that veterinary medicine is the appropriate career change for you. This can be done part-time or full-time based on your individual circumstances. If prerequisite course work needs to be completed, explore colleges in your area to see if the required courses are offered. Visit the ASSIST Web site ([www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)) for current articulation agreements. Courses may be taken during a regular college session, summer sessions, evening classes or through Extension/Open Campus classes. Take the Graduate Record Examination and review our Web site for information on the application process.

## **19. What is the deadline to take the GRE?**

The GRE must be taken by October 1 of the year you submit your application. Tests taken after this date will not be evaluated with the current year's application.

## **20. My GRE scores are more than five years old. Do I need to retake the exam?**

Yes. The GRE must be taken within a five-year period prior to applying to veterinary school and must include the Verbal, Quantitative and Analytical Writing sections.

## **21. May I retake the GRE to improve my scores?**

Yes. You should retake the examination to improve your scores if they are not competitive. When you take the GRE multiple times, we consider the highest scores in each section for examinations taken within the five-year period.



A student monitors patient anesthesia at the Gourley Clinical Teaching Center. Students learn surgical skills performing spay-neuter and other procedures for shelter animals that return to local shelters for adoption.

## **22. May I take the VCAT or MCAT instead of the GRE?**

No. We cannot accept any substitutes for the GRE.

## **23. How much veterinary experience is required?**

A minimum of 180 hours of veterinary experience is required to have your application considered for admission. Admitted applicants have an average of 2,500 to 3,000 hours of quality hands-on experience in the veterinary field. You are expected to have a realistic and appropriate perspective of the responsibilities of the veterinary profession. Your experience may come from a job or volunteer service. You may acquire experience by working with veterinarians in private practice or by working at farms, ranches, animal shelters, zoos, aquaria, laboratories and other settings.

## **24. How many letters of evaluation do I need?**

Three letters of evaluation are required. One to two evaluations should be from veterinarians with whom you have worked and who can evaluate your potential as a veterinary professional. Of these letters, one should be from a veterinarian in your area of veterinary interest (small animal, large animal, equine, etc.). Other letters may be written by veterinarians, professors, college instructors, research supervisors, or your academic adviser.

## **25. Are interviews required?**

Yes. Interviews are based on academic achievement and subjective information provided in the application. Interview notifications are sent in February.

## **26. Where do I get an application for admission?**

Applicants to UC Davis apply through the Veterinary Medical Colleges Application Service (VMCAS). The online application is available at [www.vmcas.org](http://www.vmcas.org) beginning in June. Follow the VMCAS application instructions very carefully. In addition, review the application information available on the UC Davis Web site for specific instructions regarding our requirements.

## **27. When is the deadline to submit an application?**

The application deadline is October 1 for admission the following fall term.

## **28. May I have my application reviewed by an adviser prior to submitting it?**

No. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate these requests.

## **29. May I apply again if I am not accepted after my first application?**

Yes. We encourage you to make improvements in your application and re-apply. Review the statistics of the students admitted to the DVM program and compare your application. Retake the GRE if your scores are lower than the average of those admitted. Acquire additional veterinary experience if yours is limited. (The average admitted applicant works—for pay or as a volunteer—approximately one and one-half to two years to gain experience.) Review and rewrite your personal statement if necessary to clearly convey your knowledge and dedication to the veterinary profession. Make sure you get high grades in all continuing college course work.

## **30. Do I need to submit a new application the next year I wish to apply?**

Yes. You must submit a current online application, official college transcripts, GRE reports, and three letters of evaluation for each year that you wish to be considered for admission.

## **31. What does it cost to attend veterinary school?**

The current annual enrollment and registration fees are listed online ([www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/studentprograms/subpages/admission\\_info/financing\\_education.html](http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/studentprograms/subpages/admission_info/financing_education.html)).

## **32. How can I establish California residency?**

Rules and regulations for establishing residency are explained on the UC Davis Web site (<http://registrar.ucdavis.edu/UCDWebCatalog/appendix/residency.html>).

## **33. Do you accept transfer students from other veterinary schools?**

No, we do not accept transfer students.

*We hope this answers many of your questions regarding admission to the DVM program. Visit our Web site ([www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu](http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu)) periodically for updated information.*



A new five-story laboratory building fosters collaboration between faculty researchers, graduate students and professional students.