



BECOMING A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT

Some veterinary schools may allow students to begin without a bachelor's degree after completing all prerequisite courses, but many require the completion of a bachelor's degree prior to starting veterinary school. Competitive applicants for admission have solid academic records, well-rounded profiles of co-curricular experiences, strong scores on the GRE (if required), supportive letters of recommendation, and can clearly articulate their reasons for choosing veterinary medicine.

SELECTING A MAJOR

Students are encouraged to choose a major where they can demonstrate strong overall academic performance, while also focusing on developing a solid foundation in the sciences. Ideally, a major should be based on student interests and should support an alternate career. Veterinary schools look for students who demonstrate the academic ability to handle rigorous course loads.

GRADES & GPA

C is an honorable grade. However, grades below B, especially within the two academic years leading up to veterinary school application, could interfere with admission. Faced with a likely grade below C, some students should withdraw (W) and later try for a higher grade. Students should work with advisors as they decide. More than two W's could indicate a lack of judgment or an inability to handle challenges in veterinary school.

GPA's calculated on vet school applications include coursework at all colleges attended and all attempts at a course.

Aim for GPA's of 3.3 or above.

CREIGHTON PRE-HEALTH RESOURCES

Pre-Health Advisors in the Center for Advising Resources & Support are available to meet with students individually about their pre-health path.

The Pre-Professional Communities assist students in exploring the veterinary profession, gaining experience in healthcare, and preparing for the application process. Students should participate in PHLC 200 in their sophomore year. Students are encouraged to participate in PMED 300 as guests during the junior or senior year, as the preparation process for veterinary school is similar to the process for medical school.

PRE-VETERINARY FACT SHEET

PREREQUISITE & RECOMMENDED COURSES

Pre-veterinary students who complete the following courses should be well-prepared to apply to a large percentage of veterinary programs. Students should research individual schools to ensure they are aware of all prerequisite courses and admission policies.

PREREQUISITES MOST OFTEN REQUIRED BY VETERINARY PROGRAMS

- General Biology I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - BIO 201/205 & BIO 202/206
- General Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 203/204 & CHM 205/206
- Organic Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 321/322 & CHM 323/324
- General Physics I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - PHY 201/205 & 202/206
- Biochemistry - 3 or 6 hours - CHM 371 or CHM 383 & 384
- Genetics - 3 or 4 hours - BIO 317 (3), BIO 318 (1)
- Microbiology - 3 or 4 hours - BIO 350 (non-BIO majors) or BIO 452/453 (BIO majors)
- Calculus - 3 or 4 hours - MTH 231 or MTH 245
- Statistics - 3 or 4 hours - Many options
- English - 6 hours

SOME ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED COURSES TO CHOOSE FROM

- Animal Behavior - 3 or 5 hours - BIO 371 (3), BIO 372 (2)
- Cell Structure and Function - 3 or 4 hours - BIO 362 (3), BIO 363 (1)
- Parasitology - 4 hours - BIO 439
- Physiology - 3 or 4 hours - BIO 449 (3), BIO 450 (1)
- Vertebrate Comparative Anatomy - 4 hours - BIO 433
- Zoology - 4 hours - BIO 335

While many veterinary programs may accept AP/CLEP/IB, dual-enrollment, or community college courses to meet prerequisites, applicants should research individual schools to be certain of their admissions policies. Generally, it is best to take science prerequisites from a 4-year university.

CO-CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

LEADERSHIP & TEAMWORK

Students must demonstrate leadership and interpersonal skills. Consider initiating group projects, serving as an officer in a student organization, or working as a teaching assistant. Students must also demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively. Group projects within classes, team sports, and working on a research team are just a few ways to demonstrate this ability.

VOLUNTEER & SERVICE

It is important to demonstrate sustained commitment over time. Students should have service experiences in animal and non-animal settings. Check out the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice for opportunities: blogs.creighton.edu/ccsj

ANIMAL EXPERIENCE

Working with animals is valuable experience. Volunteering at shelters or rescue organizations, participating in summer enrichment opportunities, experience in 4-H and FFA, or even employment in a veterinary office are all ways to gain animal experience.

SHADOWING

Students must gain knowledge of the profession by shadowing professionals in their field or by working and volunteering with veterinarians. Varied experiences working with different animal populations can be important and helpful.

RESEARCH

Research experience working with vets or animals may add an extra layer to an application, especially if the student is interested in research. See the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship for opportunities: www.creighton.edu/curas

COURSE SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Freshmen and sophomores usually take only two natural science or math subjects each semester.

Chemistry: General Chemistry I (CHM 203/204) and General Chemistry II (CHM 205/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. To be eligible to take General Chemistry in the freshman year, students must achieve a sufficient score on the Quantitative Assessment for New Students (QANS). Students who do not achieve a sufficient QANS score will need to complete an introductory chemistry course, CHM 105, with a grade of "C" or better to progress to CHM 203.

Biology: General Biology I (BIO 201/205) and General Biology II (BIO 202/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. Completion of either General Chemistry I (CHM 203) with a grade of "C" or better or Introductory Chemistry (CHM 105) with a grade of "B" or better is required in order to take General Biology II.

Physics: Students who have sufficient math and physics (a year of high school physics or a semester of college introductory physics, math through pre-calculus) are eligible to take General Physics I (PHY 201/205) and General Physics II (PHY 202/206). Prospective math, physics, and chemistry majors may take alternate sections of General Physics and additional math.

Math: Pre-veterinary students may be required to complete a calculus course. This requirement can be fulfilled by either MTH 231 or MTH 245. Math, physics, and chemistry majors will need more than one semester of calculus, and should take MTH 245.

Summer: Science courses may be taken in the summer, but only when there are good reasons for doing so (not just a vague desire to "catch up") and usually not at community colleges. Speak with a Pre-Health Advisor about timelines.

Sample First Semester Schedule

Course sequencing may vary depending on a student's readiness

- General Biology I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- General Chemistry I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- Magis Core Class (3 or 4 hours) - ENG or Critical Issues & COM 101
- Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PHL or THL
- Maybe another Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PSY, SOC or Foreign Language
- RSP Class (.5 hours)

VETERINARY SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

ADMISSION TESTS

Few veterinary programs now require the Graduate Record Exam (GRE); several require the Casper situational judgement test.

VETERINARY MEDICINE CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE (VMCAS)

Students apply to veterinary programs using VMCAS. Students submit information that is transmitted to all programs they apply to, as well as program-specific information that goes to individual schools. VMCAS opens annually in January, but students cannot start selecting specific programs to apply to until May.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Students must submit at least three letters of recommendation. One letter should come from a professor who taught the student in a science course. A letter from a veterinarian may be required. Research individual schools for letter requirements.

INTERVIEWS

Many veterinary programs will interview promising applicants. The John P. Fahey Career Center offers interview preparation assistance, including mock interviews.

PRE-VETERINARY GROUPS & RESOURCES

PRE-VET CLUB

All pre-veterinary students should participate in the Pre-Vet Club. This student organization provides leadership opportunities to explore and gain experience in the veterinary profession:

<https://cuinvolved.creighton.edu/organization/pre-vetclub>

VETERINARY PROGRAMS

There are 33 schools or colleges of veterinary medicine in the U.S. Students can access a list through the American Association of Veterinary Medicine Colleges' website.

HELPFUL LINKS

- American Association of Veterinary Medicine Colleges | aavmc.org
- VMCAS | vmcas.liaisoncas.com
- Veterinary Medical School Admissions Requirements | applytovetschool.org