



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

Pre-Health Advising Office

Applicant Orientation

(for students planning to apply to Veterinary Schools)

Tas Qadri

Pre-PA and Pre-Veterinary Advisor

Office of the Vice-President for Instruction



Meet our Staff!

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About the Pre-Health Advising Office

- Our office advises all UGA students interested in healthcare careers.
 - Medicine, dentistry, optometry, allied-health (PA, PT, OT, AA, GC), and nursing.
- We are located in 130 Memorial Hall
 - **Website:** ppao.uga.edu
 - **Email:** pemed@uga.edu
 - **Phone:** 706-542-0444
- Visit our website:
 - To join our Pre-Health UGA listserv
 - To check out our Pre-Health Event Calendar for upcoming meetings/workshops/events.
 - To make an appointment with a Pre-Vet Advisor.
 - To download our Pre-Professional Planner on your iPhone



Upcoming Pre-Health Events

Upcoming Events Calendar:

<https://prehealth.uga.edu/resources/>

This is a great tool to review weekly to see all the great workshops and meetings scheduled for our health and veterinarianian clubs.

It is updated regularly.



Important Upcoming Application Dates

For the 2022-2023 application cycle:

- **VMCAS (Vet Schools)**

January: Application Opens

May : Submit Application

September : Application Closed



Orientation Overview

- Application and Timeline
- Components of Application
 - Academic History
 - Academic Transcripts and GPA
 - GRE
 - Supporting Information
 - Shadowing/Animal Care Experiences
 - Activities
 - Personal Statement/Essay
 - Letters of Evaluation
- Where should I apply?
- Interviews
- Should I take a Gap-Year?
- What if I am not competitive?



Veterinary School in Georgia

There is only one
veterinary school in
Georgia located at UGA.

Other schools you can
locate across the world by
using this link:

[Veterinary Medical
School Admission
Requirements \(VMSAR\)
\(applytovetschool.org\)](https://applytovetschool.org)





Application

- **Centralized Application Services**
 - VMCAS – Veterinary school application
- The application has an instruction manual—download it!
 - The Pre-Vet club also typically holds a meeting all about application services at the end of the term. Be on the lookout for announcements!
- Submit your application as early as possible!
 - Takes approximately 1-2 months to be verified



Supplemental Applications

- Most schools you apply to will also require that you submit a *supplemental application*.
 - This is typically an application to the institution's graduate school
 - May also include short answer/essay questions.
 - Usually linked through the CAS system, if the school participates in that service
- All portions of the supplemental application must be submitted for your application to be considered complete
- Avoid repeating content from CAS essay in any potential supplemental essays/responses.



UGA Veterinary Application Timeline

Institution	Application Period	Matriculation Date
University of Georgia	January-September	August of the next year



Primary Components of Application

1. Academic History

- Overall GPA vs. Science/Prerequisite GPA
- Transcripts

2. Activities/Experiences

- Shadowing (Exposure to animal experience interaction)
- Volunteering (Commitment to helping others and community involvement)
- Leadership (Extracurricular engagement)
- Research

3. Personal Statement and/or Essay(s)

4. Letters of Evaluation





Academic History

- Overall GPA vs. Science/Prerequisite GPA
 - Biology, Chemistry, Physics (BCP)
 - ~3.5-3.6 GPA is average for accepted applicants
- Trends
 - Did you challenge yourself?
 - Did you improve over time?
 - Did you take your science courses at UGA?
 - Do you have only 1-2 withdrawals?
- Transcripts:
 - Submit an official transcript from **every** institution you attended
 - Request transcripts early as they can take several weeks to send and process
 - Refer to the application instructions regarding where to send transcripts and how to enter coursework



Veterinary School Admission Requirements

- Always double-check with schools you are interested in!
 - Requirements can change year-to-year

General AA School Requirements

Biology I and II (BIOL 1107/L, BIOL 1108/L)

Chemistry I and II (CHEM 1211/L, CHEM 1212/L)

Organic Chemistry (CHEM 2211/L, CHEM 2212/L)

Physics I and II (PHYS 1111/L, PHYS 1112/L or PHYS 1211 and 1212)

Cell Biology (CBIO 2200/L, CBIO 2210/L, or other anatomy/physiology options)

Statistics (STAT 2000 or BIOS 2010)
Calculus (MATH 2250)

Biochemistry (BCMB 3100 or 4010 or 4020)

Psychology (PSYC 1101)

VPHY 3100, PMCY 3000,

CBIO 3710,3000, 3400, 4100 and other animal science classes



Is AP credit accepted?

- **The policies regarding acceptance of AP credit vary greatly amongst veterinary programs across North America and the world.**
- **It is recommended to take all your BCP (biology, chemistry, and physics) classes at the university you attend.**
- **Important to check with individual schools you hope to apply to.**



GRE

- There are only two schools requiring the GRE. Oklahoma State University and Tuskegee University.

If you plan on applying to those two schools:

- Take the GRE no later than Spring/early Summer of the year you plan to apply
 - Offered regularly; however, it will take a couple of weeks to receive your official score report and have that sent to programs of interest.
 - Registration is rolling and can be completed via the University Testing Center on campus.
- Courses you need before the exam:
 - No specific coursework is required pre-GRE since the “General Test” is required
- GRE scores range from 260-340
 - Try to score at least 310 (50th percentile) as a composite (combined) score
 - ~155 for quantitative, ~155 for verbal, ~4.0 writing
- You can study for the GRE on your own or take a GRE prep-course
 - Key is to make a study plan and take practice tests!





Supporting Information: Activities & Experiences

- Applicants use the Supporting Information/Experiences section to provide detailed information about:
 - **Observation Hours:** Time spent officially following and observing a veterinarian at work, preferably in small animals, large animals and exotic animals.
 - **Employment:** Paid work done outside of the animal care field; for example, a retail or restaurant job.
 - **Extracurricular Activities:** Includes research, club memberships, sports, etc. through a college or university.
 - **Research:** Research projects done in addition to classroom work; research generally should NOT appear as credit on a school transcript but may be acceptable for some programs (refer to instructions for specific application).
 - **Volunteer:** Volunteer work done outside of the health care field; for example, working for Habitat for Humanity, tutoring students, participating in or working for a fundraiser walk or blood drive, etc.
- Anything you add is fair game for an interview!
 - Include activities in which you were actively engaged.
 - Highlight specific qualities (e.g., leadership, teamwork, compassion, etc.).
 - Try to avoid including things in which you are a passive participant.





Observation Hours and Animal Care Experience

- Keeping track of experiences
 - It is recommended that you use our Pre-Professional Planner App that can be found on our [website](#) to keep track of your experiences—specifically your supervisor’s name and contact information, dates present, and hours accumulated.
 - You may also want to make note of memorable experiences to draw from later for interview/essay prompts
- Verifying Experiences
 - Generally, application services will request the contact information of your supervisor for observation hours and animal care experiences.
 - They will then contact this individual (usually via email) to electronically verify your experiences
 - No physical signatures need to be obtained by you
 - Good practice to follow up with providers before application opens to let them know this email is coming!





Supporting Information: Personal Statement/Essay

Personal Statement

- Your chance to inform committee about yourself beyond transcript.
 - Pay close attention to number of characters (not words) that you can submit
 - DO NOT exceed maximum length
 - Triple-check for grammar and spelling errors!
- Need to answer these questions:
 - *Why do you want to be a veterinarian?*
 - *Why do I want to pursue education in this field?*
 - *What do you want schools to know about you that hasn't been disclosed in other sections of the application?*
 - *Explain a defining moment that helped steer you toward a career in this field*
 - *COVID essay included now*

Essay Prompt(s)

- Vet applications have supplemental application where you will be given an 3 essay prompts
 - Typically limed to ~1 page (3,000 characters including spaces)
- Start early! Give yourself at least two months to work on your statement.
 - Have several people read it (letter-writers, advisor, etc.)
 - UGA resources: Honors College, Career Center



Supporting Information: Letters of Recommendation

- Most programs require **three letters**: You can upload up to six letters but the three listed are the most important
 - 1 Veterinarian provider
 - 1 professor (should be a science or in major or in prerequisite courses)
 - Additional letter(s) from another academic professional, healthcare provider, supervisor, or someone who knows the you well enough to speak positively on your behalf.
 - You can upload up to 6 letters in VMCAS
- Letters should come from people who know you!
 - Will need to describe you as an individual—behavior, character traits, maturity-level, etc.
- The Pre-Health Advising office no longer writes nor submits letters of evaluation.
- The absence of a committee or advisor letter will not negatively affect your application.



How should I ask for Letters of Evaluation?

- Ask early! January-March of year you plan to apply.
 - Keep in mind, though, that letters cannot be submitted until the application cycle officially opens
- Email about meeting in person, then ask for letter during meeting.
- Always ask whether they can write you a positive letter!
- Provide the following to your letter-writers:
 - Resume or CV
 - Draft of personal statement (if needed for application)
 - Information about the programs you're applying to and your goals
 - [Guidelines for Letter-Writers handout](#) (provided by Pre-Health Advising Office)



How should my Letters be submitted?

- Programs that participate in the VMCAS system will have evaluators submit electronically.
 - All recommendations can be submitted electronically by recommenders using [Letters by Liaison](#), our Recommender Portal.
 - **Prepare your recommenders.** Once you choose your recommenders, be sure to inform them about the process and that they will be completing the recommendation electronically. We recommend getting their preferred email address and asking that they monitor that inbox for your recommendation request (which will come from **vmcasinfo@vmcas.org**), including any junk or spam folders.
- Always waive your right to view your letters of evaluation!



Where should I apply?

- Recommend applying to several schools.
 - Admissions are very fickle. Many variables affect likelihood of interview.
 - There are no true “back-up” schools.
- Consider applying to out-of-state schools.
 - State institutions are very particular about residency, private schools are not.
- Use the ***VMCAS Program Directory, as well as individual webpages***
 - Overview and admissions data for accredited programs
 - Review necessary application materials



Background Check

- Report anything you think might be an issue.
 - Honor Code violations
 - Legal issues (misdemeanors, felonies, etc.)
- Not reporting is considered the same as lying.
- If you have had a violation expunged, be sure to pull record and verify.
- If something happens *after* you apply or are accepted, you must report.
- Bottom-line, try to keep your nose clean!



Interviews

- Most veterinary schools do not have interviews. If they do, then interview season begins when VMCAS application closes in mid-September and will continue into the Spring.
- An invitation to interview typically means your “numbers” are good.
- Interviewers are trying to find out who you are.
 - No right/wrong answers—more about how you answer and interpersonal communication skills.
- Tips:
 - Know your application inside and out.
 - Dress conservatively (no tattoos, minimal jewelry, beards trimmed, comfy shoes)
 - Interview begins the minute you step on campus
 - Send thank-you notes within 2-weeks of interview (email or hand-written)
- Career Center conducts mock interviews
 - Schedule early! Try for Spring/Early Fall.



Gap Year

- Why take a Gap Year?
 - I didn't get in.
 - I am not ready to apply.
 - I need a break from school.
- Work on weak spots in your application.
 - Complete a post-bac
 - Retake GRE
 - Increase volunteering and animal experience
- Key to Gap Year is planning.
 - Try to stay busy and do things that allow you to grow and cultivate new skills



What if I am not competitive?

- It's *okay* not to get in the first time! Plenty of people have to reapply.
- Take a Gap Year to work on becoming more competitive.
 - Take additional courses or complete a graduate degree
 - Re-take the GRE
 - Seek out more volunteering and shadowing opportunities
- Consider another career with your completed Undergrad:
 - Ecologist, environmental consultant, higher education lecturer, nature conservation officer, scientific writer.
 - Consider talking with a career consultant further about other career paths may be best-suited to your strengths



Fee Assistance Programs

A limited number of fee waivers are provided by VMCAS to qualified applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Each fee waiver covers only the initial application fee, so if you wish to apply to additional programs, you are responsible for the remaining balance. If you received a fee waiver during a previous cycle, you may still apply for another in the next cycle.

Keep in mind that fee waiver funds can be quickly depleted.

There is a deadline for fee waiver requests to be submitted by.

Qualification Requirements

There are three types of fee waivers applicants can qualify for:

- Financial-based
- Service-based
- International-based

You can only apply for one type of fee waiver per cycle.





Major Takeaways

- Plan out each move in advance!
- Submit your application as early as you can (but don't rush it)!
- Always have a Plan B!
- Utilize the Pre-Health Advising Office!
 - Join the Pre-Health listserv
 - Meet with Pre-Vet Advisor
 - Review our website



Questions?

Pre-Health Advising Office

Website: ppao.uga.edu

Email: tqadri@uga.edu

Phone: 706-542-0444

To make an appointment with Pre-Vet Advisor, please visit website or log onto SAGE.

