Pre–Vet Quick Facts

You should prepare for a career as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) by building credentials in scholarship, leadership, humanitarian/community service, and by shadowing in the various settings of the profession. Vet schools do not require any specific major nor do they lend weight to major selection in the admissions process. You are encouraged to pursue a major you are genuinely interested in as that will help you excel. Remember to consult a pre-health advisor about your individual plan.

❖ Unique Pre–Vet Major Option for UGA Students

The College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES) **Animal Health** major gives you the opportunity to apply to the UGA College of Veterinary Medicine before your third year. This is a fast-paced, rigorous major which can only be completed after you are accepted into the veterinary program and complete your first year or vet school. Animal Health majors who are not accepted to the College of Veterinary Medicine or who change their mind about early application can smoothly transition to other majors in CAES, such as Animal Science, Avian Biology, Biological Science, etc.

Average Matriculant Numbers

- **Overall GPA:** 3.60
- **Science GPA:** 3.60
- **GRE:** ~310 combined score & ~4.0 writing (scores above the 50th percentile)

General Information

- DVM: Four-year degree program
- Only one accredited institution in the state of Georgia:
  - ➢ UGA College of Veterinary Medicine.

Required Courses & GPA Expectations

DISCLAIMER: This is not a definitive list of the classes you will need for every school. Always check with the individual schools to see their specific requirements regarding coursework and

❖ Do grade trends matter?

Students who wish to enter a veterinary program will require strong science and overall GPAs as admission is competitive. Admissions committees look not only at raw numbers, but also at grade trends on a student's transcript—so all is not lost if a student stumbles in their first semester or two, but then shows substantial improvement each subsequent year. However, they will also notice negative trends such as if a student is consistently withdrawing from or performing poorly in hard sciences or is completing courses away from their home institution. While an instance or two is not a deal-breaker, a pattern of behavior should be avoided. Students must demonstrate the ability to handle difficult scientific content as this will translate directly to their ability to perform in a veterinary program.

Typical Vet Pre-Requisites

Biology: BIOL 1107/L & 1108/L
General Chemistry: CHEM 1211/L & 1212/L
Organic Chemistry: CHEM 2211/L & CHEM 2212/L
Physics: PHYS 1111 & 1112 or 1211 & 1212
Biochemistry: BCMB 3100 or BCMB 4020
Advances Biology Courses (8-hour Minimum) Options: VPHY 3100, GENE 3200, CBIO 3400, CBIO 3000, CBIO 4100, etc.

GRE

Most veterinary schools require that applicants take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE consists of three sections: Quantitative, Verbal, and Analytical Writing section. There are no specific courses that you need to take prior to the GRE, but you should plan to dedicate roughly six to eight weeks to exam preparation. While you can opt for a commercial prep course for the GRE, self-study is often sufficient. Students usually sit for the exam in January-April as they head into the application cycle in May. The GRE is offered via University Testing Services on a regular basis.

Veterinary Experience

Veterinary experience refers to time spent under the *direct supervision of a veterinarian* – i.e. observing or shadowing a veterinarian in action, working as a vet tech, or even doing research under a vet can sometimes count. Experiences that are not under the direct supervision of a vet, such as volunteering at an animal shelter, do not count for this requirement. Shadowing allows you to understand the veterinary profession so that you can make an informed career decision. School usually list mandatory hour minimums which can vary between programs. However, competitive applicants typically exceed the minimum hours significantly. You are highly encouraged to have over 600 hours when entering your application cycle, and more is certainly recommended. Variety in shadowing is always helpful and some programs may also require that you complete your shadowing in a specified number of settings.

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Animal Experience, Volunteering & Undergraduate Research

Animal Experience is sometimes confused and lumped in with "Veterinary Experience." However, unlike veterinary experience, animal experience refers to the time you spend working with animals <u>not</u> under the supervision of a veterinarian and usually outside of the clinical setting. This can be time you have spent volunteering at an animal shelter, involvement with the Guide Dog Foundation, working at a doggie-daycare, etc. You should try to get both small and large animal experience.

Volunteering is an important part of the application that you should not neglect. Vet schools want to see depth of commitment and substantial involvement and leadership in the community. They are looking for students who not only demonstrate that they can perform well in rigorous courses, but also those who are compassionate, enjoy working with people as well as animals, and are dedicated to serving the community. Volunteering can be done with animal-related organizations, but it can also be done with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Relay for Life, or anything else that you are passionate about.

There are many benefits to getting involved in undergraduate **research**, and many applicants to vet school do have research experience. If you are interested in research, you should begin pursing research opportunities <u>as early as freshman and sophomore year</u>. You should also plan to dedicate at least a year to a specific project or lab. When applying to vet schools, you must be able to discuss your research at various levels ("elevator speech" and in-depth). If you want to enter an DVM/Ph.D. program, you will need to be substantially more involved in research during your undergraduate career.

If you are not interested in research <u>at all</u>, you would be better served dedicating your time to other activities which you are passionate about such as volunteering or gaining veterinary and animal experience.

Letters of Evaluation

Most veterinary schools require three letters of evaluation, but specific requirements do vary between schools. Ideally, you should get one letter from a veterinarian that you have shadowed or otherwise worked with as this is a common requirement. In addition, you should also plan to get a letter from a hard science faculty member who has taught you in a course or who served as your research mentor. The final letter can come from a recommender of your choice, but you should select someone who know you well and has worked with you in a professional capacity: another veterinarian, a research mentor, volunteer coordinator, employer, etc. You should select whoever you believe will write the most compelling letter.

At UGA, it can be difficult to build a close relationship with faculty since many of the science courses are large lectures. You must be mindful of this and do your best to foster a strong relationship with faculty to be able to request a letter.

Veterinary School Application Timeline

Freshman & Sophomore Year	
Build credentials for veterinary school: shadow, volunteer, do research, build relationships with faculty, etc. Do **not** wait until junior year to begin!	
Junior Year	
Fall	Continue shadowing, doing research, volunteering, etc. Study for GRE
Jan	VMCAS opens, works on personal statements, study and take the GRE Ask for Letters of Evaluation (give letter-writers at least a month to compose)
Feb/April/May	Take GRE, send out letter of recommendation requests
Summer	
May	Complete and submit VMCAS application
June/July/August	Prepare for and complete secondary applications (look online for previous year's questions)
September	VMCAS application deadline
Senior Year	
Fall	Interview – schools requiring interviews usually do so from December – March Schools sent out admission offers. Dates vary. Check each school for their dates. Continue shadowing, doing research, volunteering, etc.
Spring	Graduate