

VETERINARY MEDICINE (D.V.M.)

ACADEMIC AND CAREER INFORMATION

NATURE OF THE WORK, EARNINGS, AND OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK

Veterinarians help animals and people live longer, healthier lives and serve society by preventing and treating animal diseases, improving the quality of the environment ensuring the safety of food, controlling diseases transmitted from animals, and advancing medical knowledge. Prospective veterinarians must have good manual dexterity, an affinity for animals and the ability to get along with animal owners. The majority of veterinarians are in private practice, although significant numbers are involved in preventive medicine, regulatory veterinary medicine, military veterinary medicine, laboratory animal medicine, research and development in industry, and teaching and research in a variety of basic science and clinical disciplines (AVMA, 2015).

Earnings and Job Outlook: In 2018, the median annual earnings of veterinarians in practice was \$93,830. Employment of veterinarians is expected to grow 18 percent from 2018 to 2028 (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2018).

TRAINING

There are 30 medical colleges/schools accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association in the U.S. Prospective veterinarians must graduate from a 4-year program at an accredited college of veterinary medicine and obtain a license to practice, which is controlled by each state or province.

Veterinary graduates who plan to work with specific types of animals or specialize in a clinical area, such as pathology, surgery, radiology, or laboratory animal medicine, usually complete a 1-year internship. Veterinarians who seek board certification in a specialty must also complete a 2- to 3-year residency program that provides intensive training in specialties, such as Internal Medicine, Oncology, Radiology, Surgery, Dermatology, Anesthesiology, Neurology, Cardiology, Ophthalmology, and Exotic Small Animal Medicine.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

Any major is appropriate as long as applicants take the required prerequisite courses. The prerequisites for admission vary by veterinary medical college. Most schools require two years of chemistry (one year general, one year organic), a year of biology and physics, and a course in biochemistry, genetics, physiology, and statistics. Courses in English and the humanities are often recommended or required.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CSULB courses which fulfill admission requirements for [Western University of Health Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine](#):

Students maintain responsibility for verifying course selection with individual programs.

Coursework	CSULB Courses
One year of Organic Chemistry with lab	Chemistry 220A & 220B + 320 L (Chem. & Biochem. majors) OR 220A w/ 223A & 220B w/ 223B
One or more courses in Biochemistry	Chemistry 441A OR 441B OR 448
Upper Division Biological & Life Sciences all with Lab	Biology 304, 313, 316, 324, 332, 340 w/ 340L, 342 w/ 342L, 345 w/ 345L, 350, 353, 355 w/ 355L, 411, 421, 423, 425, 430 (no lab), 444 (no lab), 453, 448 (Cannot double-count)
One course in Statistics	Biology 260 OR STAT 108, OR HDEV 250
One course in Microbiology	Biology 311
Genetics or Molecular Biology	Biology 370 OR 340
One course in Physiology	Biology 342 OR 345
One year General Physics with Labs	Physics 100A & 100B
One Year English Composition	English 100, 101, 102, 300
Humanities/Social Sciences	Art, Foreign Language, Political Science, History etc.

IMPORTANT FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

STANDARDIZED TEST: Applicants must submit test scores from the [Graduate Record Examination \(GRE\)](#) or the [Medical College Admission Test \(MCAT\)](#), depending on the preference of each college.

CLINICAL EXPOSURE: Veterinary medical colleges weigh heavily a candidate's veterinary and animal experience in admissions decisions. Some schools even require a certain number of hours as a prerequisite. Formal experience, such as work with veterinarians, is particularly advantageous. Less formal experience, such as working with animals at an animal shelter, is also helpful. Students must demonstrate ambition and an eagerness to work with animals. Many schools require experience in more than one type of animal setting.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: 3 letters of recommendation are required, although more may be recommended or required. For most schools, at least one letter must be from a practicing veterinarian and another from a professor.

ADMISSIONS: The [Veterinary Medical College Application Service \(VMCAS\)](#) is used for applications to veterinary school.

ADMISSIONS STATISTICS: The national average GPA for the Fall 2018 entering class was **3.6 (Total)** and **3.5 (Science)**. The average GRE score was Quantitative at the 53.5th percentile, Verbal at the 65.1th percentile, and Writing at the 61.9th percentile.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Veterinary Medical College Application Service \(VMCAS\)](#)
- [Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges \(AAVMC\)](#)
 - [AAVMC: Pre Vet Student Resources](#)

See your HPAO advisor for more information on Veterinary Medicine, the application process, and a list of upcoming workshops and events.