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With the aid of: The Health Careers Program Advisory Board
The Health Careers Advising Network
College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell
Cornell Career Services Staff

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Table of Contents

• Health Careers Website Homepage.....	Overleaf
	Page
Frequently Asked Questions	1
• Which college	
• What major	
• Experience needed	
• Other topics	
Course Requirements	3
• What to take/When to take	
• AP, summer courses, etc.	
• CVMCU requirements	
Calendar of Events	8
• Briefings	
• Orientations	
Year-by-Year Checklist	9
Application Process	
• Obtaining Letters of Recommendation.....	11
• Filing Veterinary School Applications.....	13
• The Interview at Veterinary School.....	16
• Interview Worksheet.....	17
• Follow Up Actions.....	18
• If You're Not Accepted.....	18
Related Information	
• Health Careers Advisors.....	19
• Guaranteed Admission at CVMCU.....	20
• Class Profiles and Applications: CVMCU.....	21

Which college should I enroll in?

A student in any undergraduate college at Cornell may enroll in the courses required for entry into veterinary college. Cornell undergraduate applicants to veterinary school are enrolled primarily in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with a few in the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the College of Human Ecology. The appropriate choice depends largely on your other academic and career interests. Students should consult the University's publications for information about the seven colleges at Cornell, reviewing their requirements, majors, and course descriptions.

What should I major in?

Veterinary schools do not require or recommend any particular undergraduate major course of study or designated preveterinary program. Cornell does not have a preveterinary major, and there is no evidence that admissions committees of veterinary colleges give special consideration to any particular undergraduate education beyond satisfactory completion of the required undergraduate courses; for this reason you are encouraged to pursue your own intellectual interest in an academic major.

For example, you might major in animal science, biological sciences, natural resources, or development sociology in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Or you might major in biological sciences, English, anthropology in the College of Arts and Sciences or nutrition in the College of Human Ecology. You complete the preprofessional core of courses while at the same time receiving a broad education and exploring other interests and careers. You are more likely to succeed at and benefit from subjects that interest and stimulate you, and you leave open the option of pursuing an alternative career.

What courses should I take?

Veterinary schools, while not requiring or recommending any particular major course of study, do require that particular undergraduate courses be completed. Listed below are the minimum course requirements for admission to the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University. *Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements (VMSAR)* contains details for other schools.

English Composition	6 semester credit hours
Biology or Zoology (with laboratory)	6 semester credit hours
Introductory Chemistry (with laboratory)	6 semester credit hours
Organic Chemistry (with laboratory)	6 semester credit hours
Biochemistry	4 semester credit hours
Physics (with laboratory)	6 semester credit hours
General Microbiology (with laboratory)	3 semester credit hours

Education for becoming a veterinarian: a wider view

In discussing science course requirements for veterinary school, it is important to realize that these are only part of the total educational picture that veterinary schools consider. It is generally agreed that an applicant must be able to perform well in science, to think like a scientist, and even to enjoy science in order to be a competent veterinarian. Being an educated person with an understanding of human nature and human achievement is equally important to veterinarians, both professionally and personally.

What kinds of animal care related experience do I need?

Veterinary medicine is an animal oriented profession. Therefore, your experiences working with different kinds of animals in different settings and your understanding of the veterinary profession are important considerations in the selection process. Such experience could involve breeding, rearing, feeding and showing various kinds of animals including companion animals, livestock, laboratory animals, zoo animals, or wildlife. You should be prepared to present evidence of hands-on experience with animals and sufficient contact with the veterinary profession so that the admissions committee can determine that you have some understanding of the duties and responsibilities of a practitioner and the scope of veterinary medicine.

What are the acceptance statistics for veterinary schools?

For the classes entering the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University (CVMCU) for the past five years, generally over 20 members of the class were from Cornell. Approximately 100 Cornellians apply to CVMCU each year. No figures are currently available for Cornell students accepted at veterinary schools other than Cornell. Nationally, in 2006 there were over 5,000 applicants to U.S. vet schools and over 2,600 enrolled.

What is the current employment outlook for vets?

Seventy-five percent of all veterinarians are in private practice; however, veterinarians are employed by government, business, universities, and the military in a wide variety of research, regulatory, and clinical roles. In 2004 the average starting salary for recent graduates was around \$50,000 for both small animal and large animal practice. The median annual income for veterinarians was \$68,280 in 2004. Federally employed veterinarians averaged \$78,769 in 2005.

You should expect to borrow to cover veterinary college expenses. In order to be able to get loans, be sure to maintain a good credit rating throughout your college years. In 2006 the mean national indebtedness of veterinary graduates was \$90,654.

What is the double registration program?

The double registration program between Cornell University and the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University is approved for students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. It enables a qualified student to save one year in pursuit of the Bachelor and D.V.M. degrees. The program is intended for students who have been admitted to the College of Veterinary Medicine after completing three years of undergraduate work and who have made sufficient progress on the Bachelor's Degree requirements. Certain courses taken in the College of Veterinary Medicine can be used to complete those requirements. An outline of the procedures is available from the Health Careers Program, Cornell Career Services, 103 Barnes Hall.

What help does Cornell provide for health careers students?

The Health Careers Program is located in Cornell Career Services, 103 Barnes Hall. It provides informational programs, library resources, and advising for students and distributes the *Cornell Prevetterinary Guide*. Members of the university-wide Health Careers Advising Network also do advising.

Resources: A sample of books available in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall include:

American Zoo and Aquarium Membership Directory
Career Choices for Veterinarians: Beyond Private Practice, Carin Smith, DVM
Careers with Animals, Ellen Shenk
Complete Guide to Horse Careers, Sue Reynolds
Extraordinary Jobs with Animals, Alecia Devantier & Carol Turkington
Opportunities in Zoo Careers, Sydney J. Butter

Cornell Courses Recommended to Satisfy Veterinary School Requirements 2007-2008

General Requirements

Preveterinary students major in subject areas of their choice while fulfilling the requirements for veterinary school as recommended by the Health Careers Program Advisory Board (HCPAB). A preveterinary student must also fulfill the requirements of his/her college as well as the requirements of the major.

This list provides **general minimal requirements** for most schools of veterinary medicine, however, you should check on **particular schools**, in *Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements (VMSAR)*.

Recommended minimum courses for veterinary schools	Rec. sem. hrs.	Cornell University courses recommended to fulfill these requirements
<p>CHEMISTRY General or Inorganic</p>	8	<p>Chem 207 + 208 or Chem 215 + 216* For students with strong chemistry backgrounds (Honors) or Chem 211 + 208 Possible sequence for engineering students</p> <p>See also "Course Selection." It is possible that mixing sequences (e.g., 215 + 208) may not provide full coverage of MCAT topics, despite satisfying the veterinary school requirements for two semesters of introductory chemistry. See www.aamc.org/students/mcat/about/start.htm for science topics in the exam. Chem 206 is a one-semester introduction to chemistry. Although it can be used to replace Chem 207 in the Chem 207-208 sequence, this is not recommended; and students, particularly those with a weaker chemistry background, may find themselves disadvantaged in Chem 208.</p> <p>*Students who decide not to proceed to Chem 216 should see the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) in the Chemistry Department for possible alternative courses in that department.</p>
Organic	8	<p>Chem 357 + 358 + 251 Usual sequence or Chem 357 + 358 + 301* or Chem 359 + 360 + 301* or Chem 359 + 360 + 251</p> <p>Chem 359, 360, and 301 are honors courses</p> <p>*Note: Chem 300 is prerequisite for 301.</p>
<p>BIOLOGY Introductory</p>	8	<p>Bio G 101/103 + 102/104 or Bio G 105 + 106 or Bio G 107 + 108 (Summer only)</p> <p>Also possible is any combination of the first term of one of the above sequences followed by the second term of another.</p> <p>Because the introductory year is a minimal requirement and because many schools require or recommend an advanced course or courses, the HCPAB does NOT recommend Bio G 109 + 110, as it is not a satisfactory prerequisite for advanced courses.</p>
Advanced		<p>Most veterinary schools require biochemistry, microbiology, genetics, and/or other specific advanced biology courses such as mammalian embryology, botany, and/or zoology. See <i>VMSAR</i> or on line at aavmc.org. Note carefully the number of semester credit hours required.</p>

<p>PHYSICS General or Introductory</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Physics 101 + 102 Usual sequence, not calculus based, auto-tutorial*</p> <p>or Physics 207 + 208 Usual sequence, calculus based</p> <p>or Physics 112 + 208 Possible sequence, also using calculus</p> <p>or Physics 112 + 213 + 214 Possible 12 semester hour sequence**</p> <p>*Physics 103 is a summer, lecture-style version of and substitute for P101. **This three-semester sequence gives minimal coverage to fluids. Students using only parts of a sequence or mixing parts of two – and three – semester sequences may find certain MCAT topics not covered. Crossovers between 101/208, 103/208, and 207/102 are acceptable; consult appropriate faculty.</p>
<p>MATHEMATICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE,</p>		<p>College work in mathematics is required by most schools. A very few schools require one semester of calculus. See <i>VMSAR</i>.</p>
<p>ENGLISH COMPOSITION</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Most veterinary schools will accept two First-Year Writing Seminars in fulfillment of their writing requirement. Some require more than six semester credit hours. The John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, 101 McGraw Hall, will provide a notice stating that First-Year Writing Seminars taken in any department are equivalent to "English composition" courses.</p>
<p>Oral Communication</p>		<p>Several schools require. See <i>VMSAR</i>.</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL COURSES</p>		<p>Students need to be aware that some institutions have very specific requirements, for example, qualitative chemistry, quantitative chemistry, animal science, humanities and social sciences, in addition to the almost universal requirements listed above. Students need to be concerned about other additional courses only if they are required by their state veterinary school or by schools in which the student has a particular interest. See <i>VMSAR</i> and the catalogs of the schools well in advance of the time of application.</p>

For more information: requirements of veterinary schools

For requirements for specific veterinary schools/colleges, states that contract for places for their residents in veterinary schools(s) of another state, addresses, etc., see *Veterinary Medical School Admission (VMSAR)*. It is sponsored by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges and available at the Campus Store or order through Purdue University Press at www.thepress.purdue.edu. For requirements for state residence, see the veterinary school of the state involved or a lawyer.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grades

Do not take any requirement for veterinary school on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis.

Transfer Students

Transfer students should verify that the courses they have taken at their previous college meet the requirements for entrance to veterinary school.

Summer School Courses

Required courses for veterinary school may be taken in summer session here or at other universities where educational standards are comparable to Cornell's. However, it is probably preferable to take these science courses at Cornell during the regular school year to demonstrate that you can perform well even while carrying a full course load. The college advising office can explain the procedure for attending summer school elsewhere.

Advanced Placement (AP)

Courses accepted by the College as satisfying graduation credit requirements **may** be used to replace introductory requirements listed previously at veterinary schools. **Check with specific veterinary schools.** Even though they may have met the minimum science requirements while in high school, some schools advise

students to pursue advanced courses in biology, chemistry, and/or physics, which provide reinforcement of previous courses. Make sure that AP is indicated on the official transcript.

Students with AP Biology should see the Office of Undergraduate Biology web page at www.bio.cornell.edu/advising/ap.cfm for information on using AP Biology credit at Cornell.

Course Selection

Which courses to take depends on several factors: your interest in the subject; test scores; high school preparation; experience in demanding, competitive courses; and major and academic goals. Placement in the right courses is very important. *Cornell Courses of Study* describes the courses; the **academic** advisor and the directors of the undergraduate studies (DUS) in relevant departments can explain the differences among courses and can help in selecting suitable courses.

Sequence of Courses

Recommended Order

The recommended order in which to take courses commonly required is: mathematics, chemistry or biology, physics. If the student plans to apply to veterinary school during fall of the senior year for acceptance the August following graduation, biology, chemistry, and mathematics need to be started by the sophomore year. Courses are usually (but not necessarily) taken during these years:

First-Year Writing Seminar - freshman

General Chemistry - freshman* or sophomore**

Introductory Biology - freshman or sophomore

Mathematics - freshman or sophomore

Physics - sophomore or junior

Organic Chemistry - sophomore or junior

Biochemistry - junior

General Microbiology - junior

Mathematics Strong quantitative skills are essential for chemistry and physics. It is recommended that college mathematics precede physics.

General Chemistry *General chemistry must be taken in the freshman year if a student plans to or wants the option to apply to vet school the fall of the junior year to attend vet school after three years of college.

Needed sequence: general chemistry - freshman, organic chemistry - sophomore, and biochemistry - junior.

**Those with a weak math background should take math before chemistry.

Organic Chemistry Co-registration in organic lecture and organic laboratory is not necessary.

Natural Science Major If you want to major in a natural science, the usual advice is to take either two science courses or mathematics and science during freshman year.

Humanities or Social Science Major If you want to major in a humanities or social science discipline, you may want to take only one mathematics or science course during freshman year in order to be able to experiment with courses from several departments. However, this may require taking two science courses in both the sophomore and junior years.

Unsatisfactory Performance in a Course

Repeating Courses

Generally speaking, courses should not be repeated. A poor performance in one of the basic courses can be redeemed partially by a good performance in a higher-level course which demonstrates strength within the same area. In some cases, however, it may be advisable or necessary to repeat the course. This is the case especially when extraneous circumstances were largely responsible for the initial weak performance. The academic advisor will help to explore these points further as well as credit hour and grade point average implications which vary among colleges. In addition, students should check the policy at schools where they are eligible to apply. Courses in which a grade of D or F was received must be repeated at some schools. This is the case at CVMCU.

Recommended sequences for students who receive a grade of D+ or lower in introductory science courses: See the appropriate departmental office.

Students Considering Applying to the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University (CVMCU)

Students entering the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CAL S) who wish to apply for admission to the CVMCU are assigned to a faculty advisor on the basis of their secondary interest in a field of specialization recognized by the College. Students in other colleges of the University should see the Academic Advising or Student Services Office of their College or Division.

Specific Prerequisites (CVMCU)

Listed below are the specific academic prerequisites for admission to CVMCU. A prerequisite will not be regarded as a satisfactory fulfillment of a course if the final grade is less than C-. Fulfilling the requirements for CVMCU will not necessarily fulfill the requirements at other veterinary schools.

Course requirements for admission to CVMCU		Cornell University courses recommended to fulfill CVMCU requirements	
Requirements	Semester Credits Min. Preferred	Semester hours of credit and prerequisites are listed in the Courses of Study.	
English Composition* *One-half of this requirement may be satisfied with an oral or written communications course	6	6	May be satisfied by 6 semester hours of First-Year Writing Seminars. This requirement may be satisfied also by 3 semester hours of First-Year Writing Seminars and 3 semester hours of Communication 131, 201, 203, 263, 352, or Entomology 336. Students in the CAL S note that 6 hours does not fulfill the CAL S group D requirement, but does apply toward it.
Biology or Zoology (full year course with lab)	6	8	Bio G 101/103 + 102/104 or Bio G 105 + 106 or Bio G 107 + 108 (Summer only) Also possible is any combination of the first term of one of the above sequences followed by the second term of another. (Bio G 109-110 is not recommended.)
Introductory Chemistry (full year course with lab)	6	8	Chemistry 207 + 208 or 215 + 216 (Honors) or 211 + 208 Possible sequence for engineering students. AP credit acceptable with a score of 4 or higher.
Organic Chemistry (full year course with lab)	6	8	Chemistry 357 + 358 + 251 or 359 + 360 + 251 or 301
Biochemistry	4	8	BioBM 330 or 331 + 332, or 333 (Summer)
Physics (full year course with lab)	6	8	Physics Either 101, 103 (Summer), or 207 followed by either 102 or 208. Crossovers are acceptable; students should consult appropriate faculty. AP credit acceptable with a score of 4 or higher.
General Microbiology (with laboratory)	3	4	BioMI 290 + 291

Mathematics

Though not a requirement, college level mathematics (for example, statistics or calculus, both highly recommended) will be highly useful to the applicant. The GRE Quantitative test measures math skills.

Prerequisite Courses

All prerequisite courses should be completed and documented with a letter grade of C- or better at the time of application. It is possible to apply with up to 12 credits in progress at the time of application, provided that the first semester of any two-semester series is underway in the fall semester at the time of application. Applicants without complete prerequisite course work may be at a disadvantage when compared to applicants who have satisfied all course requirements. All requirements must be completed by the end of the spring term (June 1) prior to matriculation (not in the summer immediately preceding matriculation).

Advanced Placement

If a student received AP credit for biology or composition, the CVMCU Admissions Committee expects an advanced course in the subject area, which is not another prevet requirement, to be listed with credit and grade in fulfillment of the preveterinary course requirement. AP credit is acceptable for physics and inorganic chemistry only with a score of 4 or higher. The college code for CVMCU is 4818.

CVMCU Information

Admission Information, College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, brochure available from the:

- Office of Student and Academic Services, CVMCU, S2-009 Schurman Hall
- Department of Animal Science, 149 Morrison Hall
- Information and Referral Center, Main Lobby, Day Hall

Also:

- Take a tour of Cornell's veterinary facilities. Listen to a prevet presentation by the CVMCU Director of Admissions. Register at www.vet.cornell.edu/admissions.
- Request "Cornell's Pre-Veterinary Newsletter" by subscribing on the CVMCU Admissions web page at www.vet.cornell.edu/admissions or sending e-mail to vet_admissions@cornell.edu.

Additional Information

VMCAS

The national Veterinary Medical Central Application Service (VMCAS) application is available on line at aavmc.org/vmcas/vmcas.htm.

Standardized Tests

All veterinary schools accept the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Some accept the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Cornell's CVM accepts either. VMSAR contains standardized test score and GPA minimums and averages for different veterinary schools; these vary from school to school.

For More Information

See the Veterinary Medicine section of Cornell Career Services web page. It can be accessed through the Cornell Career Services at www.career.cornell.edu.

FALL 2007

ORIENTATIONS

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| • <i>Freshman</i> | 4:30 pm Aug 21 | Call Alumni Aud., Kennedy Hall |
| • <i>Transfer</i> | 4:30 pm Aug 21 | Call Alumni Aud., Kennedy Hall |

BRIEFING

Briefings are informal, small-group sessions intended mostly for students who are in the process of applying to veterinary school.

- | | | |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| • Applying to U.S. Schools of Veterinary Medicine and Schools Abroad | 4:35 pm Aug 30 | 145 Warren Hall |
|--|----------------|-----------------|

GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL DAY Oct 3 11:00 am – 2:30 pm Barton Hall

Speak with admissions officers from veterinary schools and other graduate and professional schools.

EXTERN PROGRAM For Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors. Apply in October and spend one day to one week over winter break shadowing an alumnus/a in a career field of your choice. There are usually many externships with veterinarians.

FRESH PROGRAM For Freshmen only. Freshmen apply in January to shadow Cornell alumni for 1-2 day(s) during spring break and get a glimpse into a career field of their choice. Sponsors are available in a variety of career fields and geographic areas.

SPRING 2008

BRIEFING

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| • Alternatives to Veterinary School | 4:35 pm Mar 6 | See online career calendar for location
www.career.cornell.edu/events.html |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---|

Check the Cornell Career Services calendar, www.career.cornell.edu/healthcareers.html for changes and additional programs. Audios of most programs are available in the Career Library-103 Barnes Hall, open Monday-Friday, 8-4:30, including breaks and summer.

INDIVIDUAL ADVISING

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| • Walk-ins | • Judy Jensvold, Senior Associate Director, Health Careers, 103 Barnes Hall |
| • Telephone/E-mail | Monday-Thursday, 3:00 to 4:00 pm. Fridays 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. |
| • By appointment | Direct line 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm almost every day (607-255-0542); jmj5@cornell.edu |
| | See Information Services Assistants in 103 Barnes Hall or phone 255-5296. |

The checklist below pertains specifically to premedical, pre dental, and preveterinary students; however, students interested in other health fields will find portions of the following useful. All health care preprofessionals are encouraged to use the materials and audios in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall, and on the web to determine specific requirements for course work, standardized tests, and application procedures.

Throughout Your Undergraduate Career

- Refer to "Recommended Courses for Medical and/or Dental School Requirements," (pink sheet) or "Recommended Courses for Veterinary School Requirements" (blue sheet) to plan your course schedule.
- See the Cornell Career Services web page: create a CornellTRAK profile to receive health careers program information and consult the "Calendar" for program announcements.
- Attend programs featuring medical/dental/veterinary school admissions speakers, practitioners, and others. Watch for e-mail announcements.
- Attend special programs offered annually:
 - "Open House" at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell, held each spring.
 - "Grad and Professional School Day," every fall. (October 3, 2007, Barton Hall)
- Check out student health career organizations, volunteer and research opportunities, summer jobs, and internships to test and develop your career interests.
- Begin your search for summer jobs/internships during the fall semester for the following summer.
- Develop and frequently update your "Plan B"—a career option you can pursue if you don't go to a health professional school or don't go right after graduation.

Freshman Year

- Attend Freshman Orientation** for freshmen and transfer premedical and preveterinary students held during Orientation Week or listen to the audio if you are unable to attend.
- Meet with your faculty advisor and/or student academic advisors, and the prehealth careers advisor in your College to plan a four-year program to include College requirements, major requirements, and premedical/dental/veterinary requirements.
- Make the effort to get to know your teachers and advisors. You'll learn more, enjoy Cornell more, and lay the groundwork for future letters of recommendation needed when you apply.
- Remember a year or a semester away from campus (e.g., study away or a leave of absence) needs to be planned in advance; consult with your College Office and "Study Away Procedures" on the Health Careers web page.

Sophomore Year

- Attend Sophomore Orientation** for premedical/pre dental students held early in the spring semester or listen to the audio if you are unable to attend.
- Plan your prerequisite course sequence in order to complete the necessary requirements before taking national tests, e.g. Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Dental Admission Test (DAT), Graduate Record Examination (GRE), or Optometry Admission Test (OAT).
- Check out opportunities and requirements to be a teaching assistant in your junior and/or senior year.
- Continue getting to know teachers, advisors, and others who might write your letters of recommendation.

Sophomore Year (Con't)

- Use the Career Library on line keyword search to locate resources. Become familiar with the following informational resources, especially those that list specific requirements at schools, in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall:
 - *Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)*
 - *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*
 - *Veterinary School Admission Requirements in the United States and Canada (VMSAR)*
 - *Minority Student Opportunities in United States Medical Schools*

Junior Year or Senior Year, depending on when you plan to start professional school

- Attend Orientation for Jrs. & Srs. Applying in 2008** for prehealth students, held by college in September. Begin giving some thought to who might write your letters of recommendation.
- Attend HCEC Orientation** for premedical/pre dental students in the fall semester (usually held in November) or listen to the audio.
- Attend HCEC Registration** and register with the Health Careers Evaluation Committee (HCEC) in the spring semester if applying to schools of human medicine. (You are not required to use the HCEC, but most schools of human medicine require a letter of evaluation, such as that written by the HCEC.)
- Attend premed/prevet fall and spring semester briefings. These cover the steps necessary to complete the application process.
- Access web information on the MCAT, DAT, GRE, and OAT. MCAT, DAT, and OAT are taken usually in the spring/summer of the year of application. GRE is required by CVMCU to be taken no later than October of the year before desired matriculation. The MCAT is required or accepted by some veterinary schools.
- In the Career Library consult information provided by previous Cornell applicants.

Preveterinary students who are interested in applying in the fall of their junior year for acceptance in the spring of their junior year to attend veterinary school the following fall, see instructions below regarding prevet seniors.

Summer Between Junior And Senior Year

- Apply to schools of human or veterinary medicine. Check procedures, requirements, and deadlines, which vary among schools of veterinary medicine. Application can also be done at the end of senior year, giving you an interim year before attending professional school, or as an alumnus/na.

Senior Year

- Have HCEC send your letter of evaluation to medical/dental schools that have requested it.
- Attend briefings on "Interviewing at Medical/Dental School," "Follow-up Action, Acceptance Protocol, and Finances for Medical/Dental School Applicants," and "Waitlisted or Waiting: What to do." If you are not getting interviews and/or acceptances by January, see the health careers advisor.
- Interviews at schools of human medicine usually occur between October and March. Acceptances arrive mostly from late fall until May, but may go into the summer.

Purpose of Letters of Recommendation

Veterinary schools depend upon letters of recommendation to provide information and insights on character, motivation, and personal traits to supplement observations made during the interview.

Recommenders

The two central issues in considering who should write letters of recommendation are:

1. Who can write a **strong** letter? Letters that comment on the attributes related to your potential to become a good veterinarian usually are written by people who are:
 - well-acquainted with you,
 - knowledgeable and experienced in assessing preveterinary students,
 - able to compare you with other Cornellians, and
 - able to write well.
2. How can you present a **balanced profile** to the admissions committee? One person may not be able to discuss all aspects of your candidacy; but if you choose recommenders carefully, all aspects should be covered. A possible distribution of letters to achieve this might be:
 - one letter from the major, permanent faculty advisor,
 - one from a science professor,
 - one from a professor in a non-science discipline,
 - one or two from an employer (especially a veterinarian or an employer from an animal-related work experience), a club advisor, research supervisor, supervisor of a volunteer activity, etc.

Be sure to consult the application materials of each school and VMCAS to determine specific guidelines or requirements for specific kinds of recommenders (e.g. veterinarian, advisor).

Protocol

Four questions asked directly of proposed recommenders (preferably in person or possibly in a personal letter) may help them to provide a good recommendation:

1. "Would you be willing to write a letter of recommendation for me?"
2. "Do you feel it can be a strong letter?" If the answer to this question is not an enthusiastic "yes," you may indicate that you want to do further thinking before proceeding, or you may simply say, "Thank you, I'll try to find another recommender."
3. "May I make an appointment to come talk with you and review my qualifications?"
4. "I'd like you to mention (fill in the blank) in my letter. Do you feel you could do that?"

Materials to Provide for Recommenders

- A résumé or summary including in some detail the development of your interest in veterinary medicine and your goals
- A recommendation form if one is provided by the veterinary school (e.g., CVMCU, VMCAS)
- A transcript, if appropriate

The Purpose of an Appointment with the Recommender

The purpose of the appointment is to convey to the recommender that you will be a good veterinarian. Then the recommender can help you by means of the letter of recommendation to convince the veterinary schools that you are a candidate who should be interviewed. The appointment also provides an opportunity for you and the faculty recommender to study your transcript and to seek or provide explanations for courses, sequences, and grades.

The appointment also allows you a chance to present thoughts on topics such as:

- motivation for veterinary medicine
- factors that have influenced your decision to be a veterinarian
- familiarity with the profession
- work and other experiences that relate to veterinary medicine
- ethical issues related to the practice of veterinary medicine
- research or teaching experience
- academic record
- personal philosophy
- life plans

Preparation

Take time beforehand to think through the aspects of your candidacy that you would like to have included in your letter. Thinking about the topics listed above can help you to present clearer information to your recommenders.

Getting Letters Ahead of Time

In general, the strongest recommendations are those that reflect knowledge of the student over a period of time and recent contact with the student. Therefore it is best not to request letters in advance. If a letter must be requested in advance the following options are possible:

- have the recommender retain the letter in his or her files or computer until you direct where to forward copies,
- open a credential file and have the letter held there until it is needed.

Responsibility of the Student

It is your responsibility to:

- check with the veterinary schools and/or application service to be sure that the letters of recommendation are received on time, and
- remind the recommenders, if necessary.

Recommenders also like to know whether or not the students they recommend are accepted at veterinary school. A letter informing the recommender of the outcome is always a good idea. It is also a chance to thank the recommender again and keep the cycle going for future applicants.

Transfer Students

Transfer students with individual concerns should see a health careers advisor.

VMCAS and non-VMCAS

VMCAS (Veterinary Medical College Admission Service), a non-profit, centralized application service, is used by most veterinary colleges. VMCAS processes the application and sends the information to each VMCAS school the applicant designates. The VMCAS application is web-based and can be found at aavmc.org. The application becomes available early in the summer each year. VMCAS may be especially useful if you decide to apply to a number of veterinary colleges. Even if you apply through VMCAS, individual veterinary schools may require you to submit some materials directly to their school.

In general, whether applying through VMCAS or completing a non-VMCAS school's application, the process involves application forms, essays or personal statements, transcripts, and recommendations. The following information suggests how to proceed in these and related areas, but it may need to be tailored to meet the requirements of a particular school or VMCAS. These can vary from year to year.

Personal Statement or Essay

VMCAS and many veterinary schools provide the opportunity for applicants to write a personal statement, essay, or short answers to questions posed. The topic(s) may be spelled out very specifically, or space may simply be provided for writing whatever comments the applicant chooses. This VMCAS essay is an opportunity to help the admissions committee learn more about you personally, your interest in veterinary medicine, and your career goals. Use the essay to come alive to your reader and convey what is unique about you. Focus on one to three carefully selected topics and develop them using concrete examples from important experiences or events in your life. Most students see this as a golden opportunity to explain or expand on other portions of the application, to cover aspects not covered by the application form, and/or to explain the qualifications that set them apart; consequently, they invest time in writing their essay. Also, important personal circumstances that have affected your academic background can be discussed. Some admissions officers indicate that an essay sometimes may be a deciding factor in granting an interview; it also may be the point of departure in the interview. Several sources of help with the statement or essays are available:

1. To give an opinion about whether the essay is generally appropriate: a health careers advisor.
2. To aid you in presenting ideas clearly: The Writing Workshop, 178 Rockefeller Hall, open during the school year until the end of study week. It may have a consultant available during the summer. If you are prepared with a draft in hand and questions, instructors will read, suggest, and question in order to guide you in presenting the material as you want it.
3. To correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation: anyone skilled in these aspects of the English language; perhaps a roommate, a friend who is editor of the *Sun*, a teaching assistant, an English major, etc.
4. To pick up problems in the flow of words: anyone who will read the essay aloud. Pauses and hesitations by the reader indicate problems with the clarity of the idea presented or the writing.
5. To comment on the quality of the essay: an unbiased person, e.g., advisor, friend, non-science student who will be candid (probably not a parent).

Transcripts

Each student is responsible for requesting that a transcript be sent to individual veterinary schools and/or VMCAS. Cornell transcripts are available from the Office of the University Registrar, B-7 Day Hall. They may also be requested online. Transcripts for work completed at other post-secondary institutions are available from the registrar of those institutions. Send additional transcripts (fall of the year of application) whenever requested by the schools. If these transcripts are not requested, you may send them at your discretion, depending on whether they enhance your application.

Guidelines for Completing Applications

Transcript By obtaining a copy of the transcript(s) before filling out applications, you can check that the information on the application and on the transcript(s) is accurate.

Biographical information Often schools are not familiar with campus organizations or with a specific employment position; therefore, they are better able to interpret your work and extracurricular activities if you describe briefly what the organization is, how many years, and how many hours per week you are involved. Proposed activities for the next year may be entered also.

Copying A copy of the final application helps to complete secondaries and prepare for the interview.

Responsibilities of The Student

You are responsible for assuring that your application(s) are complete at VMCAS and at the schools to which you applied. Some schools maintain online sites where you can monitor the status of your application. You also may write or call later to be sure that all other materials have arrived and that your file is in order.

Addenda

After submitting the original application, you may supply additional information about important changes or new accomplishments by sending a letter at a later date to each veterinary school to which you applied. Such information may enhance chances for admission.

Where to Apply

Some veterinary schools limit their applications to state residents. Candidates who want to determine their eligibility at given schools should use the catalogs and *Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements (VMSAR)*, in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall.

Alternative Applications

Decisions about whether to apply to graduate and/or other alternative professional schools simultaneously with veterinary school or possibly the following year should be discussed with a health careers advisor.

First-Year Writing Seminars

Because some veterinary schools outside New York State may not be familiar with the First-Year Writing Seminars, you may want to provide a statement that these courses are equivalent to English composition courses.

Take these steps in this order:

1. Obtain a statement from the John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines office, 101 McGraw Hall. (Students in the College of Agriculture

and Life Sciences who fulfilled this requirement by completing courses that are not First-Year Writing Seminars should see the Registrar of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 140 Roberts Hall.)

2. Make photocopies of the writing program statement and send one to each school to which you are applying.
 - This statement should not be sent to VMCAS or other application services.
 - Send the statement directly to the individual veterinary schools. You could enclose the statement with the school's supplementary application when you return it or mail it when you submit the school's on-line supplementary application.

Rank in Class

The Registrar for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in room 140 Roberts Hall will send a form letter to veterinary schools at the request of a student. The letter will state your cumulative grade point average and your rank in the class. Students need to provide the Registrar's Office with 1) mailing labels preaddressed to the schools where the letter should be sent and 2) postage. This letter should be sent directly to the individual veterinary schools to arrive shortly after the application.

The information in the letter can be particularly useful at schools outside New York State that may not be as familiar with Cornell grades as veterinary schools that receive large numbers of Cornell applications.

Students in colleges of the University other than the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences need to talk with the Registrar's Office of their college to determine if it can provide a similar letter.

Purpose

Many schools require an interview before acceptance. In the interview the veterinary admissions staff is trying to determine the reasons the school should choose you for one of the places available in the entering class. Members of the admissions committee will have read your application materials, and are ready to learn more about you in person in the interview.

The interviewers are generally experienced and trained, and they direct the interview. The interviewer is mainly interested in your thinking style, approach to problems, interpersonal skills, motivation, and commitment and will ask questions to assess these. Some interviewers ask controversial questions (e.g., "What is your viewpoint on vivisection, animal rights, or other topics"), but they are usually more interested in how you think, than what you think.

Topics

In general, the topics covered in interviews may include:

- academic record/major,
- veterinary and animal care experience,
- research experience,
- extracurricular activities,
- summer activities and/or employment,
- knowledge of and motivation for the profession,
- current events, societal and ethical problems relating to veterinary medicine, and
- an open-ended topic such as, "Tell me about yourself."

At the end of the interview you may be given an opportunity to ask questions. Be prepared to ask appropriate questions by reading the school's web page ahead of time.

Preparation

Soul searching Spend time beforehand thinking about your background and goals, your stand on issues, and the topics listed above. This will give you confidence and enable you to present clearer answers during the interview.

The preplanned agenda Have clearly in mind the points that you want to be sure to present. This helps you to incorporate them when the opportunity presents itself or helps you to make an opportunity to present them. The Interview Worksheet on the next page can help you determine the points you want to make.

Practice Roommates or other supportive friends may listen, critique, and give suggestions. Tape record your responses, then critique them.

Mock Interview A mock interview can occur between you and a friend with the goal being to increase skill in fielding questions. A health career advisor can also give you a mock interview.

Preveterinary Briefings During fall semester, the health careers advisor will hold a briefing which will cover applying to U.S. veterinary schools and schools abroad.

The Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall contains:

- *Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements (VMSAR)*
- catalogs and videos of veterinary schools
- books on interviewing

See ccsweb.career.cornell.edu/library/search.htm to do a key word or title search of the Career Library's holdings.

Tours

Most schools provide tours of their facilities; ask staff in the school's Office of Admissions.

Alumni

It may be possible to meet with Cornellians at the school visited. Ask the staff in the Office of Admissions; they may have a file of alumni willing to talk with visiting students. Since alumni schedules are busy, call and make arrangements before arriving.

Interview Worksheet: Preparing to Be Interviewed

17

1. List the major areas of responsibility in being a doctor, dentist, veterinarian, etc.
2. List your past experiences and/or accomplishments that relate to these responsibilities.
3. Prepare to present yourself effectively.
List the major points you wish to make. List specific examples you will use to support and illustrate each point.
4. List your chief strengths and weaknesses and how you are overcoming or compensating for your weaknesses.
5. List the questions you would like to ask the interviewer. In an interview, you may not have an opportunity to ask all of them, so list them in order of importance to you.

Various actions can be taken after you submit an application in order to enhance your credentials and to call them to the attention of admissions committees. Check the application material and web page of individual veterinary schools to determine whether such actions are appropriate at a given school.

Verification

If this information is not provided by the school or on its web page, contact each school where you applied asking for verification that the file is complete. Don't assume your file is complete.

Transcripts

Summer school transcripts may be forwarded from the Registrar's Office of the institution attended. A January transcript may be needed; the admissions material will state if the school wants it. If they do not request it, you have the option of sending it, based on how high your grades are and whether they enhance your application.

Other Information

Information on any new vet-related experience acquired during the school year, a progress report on an honors thesis, a publication or pending publication, a prize or honor can all be added to the application folder.

Other Letters of Recommendation

Letters from teachers, employers, research advisors, activity advisors, etc., are useful when they add some information or insight not previously available. Some schools limit the number of personal recommendations.

Telephone Call

If no word has been received from the school after a reasonable period of time you may call the Office of Admissions to check the status of your application.

Request for Interview

A letter or telephone call indicating you would like to be interviewed is a possible action but probably should be used cautiously, depending on instructions in the application.

A Word on Timing

It is difficult to give general rules on when to do follow up actions and how many actions to take because this varies depending on your background, the date of application, action taken to date, and your feelings. For help in developing plans, consult your faculty advisor or the health careers advisor.

If You're Not Accepted

Each person's situation is unique. Rejection is a setback, but it need not be the end of your goal to attend veterinary school. With sound planning many students go on to gain admission. Use the University's advising resources to review your individual situation. Make an appointment with the health careers advisor or a career counselor in 103 Barnes Hall, or contact the health careers advisor in your college. This is the time to learn about all your options – you do have a number of them. Then you can determine your next step and create a plan for achieving your goals.

Health Careers Advising Network

19

The following staff and faculty members are designated by their colleges, divisions, or programs as prehealth professions advisors. You are encouraged to use this list to locate advisors who can assist you.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES - 145 Roberts Hall

Cate Thompson, Director, Multicultural and Diversity Programs
Phone: 254-5385 E-mail: ct30@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES - 55 Goldwin Smith Hall

Janice Turner, Assistant Dean, Academic Advising Center
Phone: 255-9497 E-mail: jft2@cornell.edu

Irene Komor, Arts and Sciences Academic Advising, Career Counselor

Phone: 255-4166 E-mail: ijk1@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING - 167 Olin Hall

Rich Robbins, Director of Engineering Advising
Phone: 255-7414 E-mail: rlr43@cornell.edu

Fran Shumway, Associate Director Engineering Advising

Phone: 255-7414 E-mail: fss2@cornell.edu

Melissa Hutson, Assistant Director, Engineering Advising

Phone: 255-7414 E-mail: mh265@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF HUMAN ECOLOGY - 172 MVR

Paula Jacobs, Associate Director Student Services & Career Services
Phone: 255-2532 E-mail: pj24@cornell.edu

Virginia Utermohlen, Associate Professor, Nutritional Sciences - 314 Savage Hall

Phone: 255-5719 E-mail: vu10@cornell.edu

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Wendy Aquadro, Assistant Director, Advising Undergrad Biology- 216 Stimson Hall
Phone: 255-5233 E-mail: gsa8@cornell.edu

Bonnie Comella, Director, Undergraduate Advising/Undergrad Biology - 216 Stimson Hall

Phone: 255-5233 E-mail: bec3@cornell.edu

Jeffrey Doyle, Professor, Plant Biology The Hays and James Clark Director - 259 Plant Science

Phone: 255-5233 E-mail: jjd5@cornell.edu

CORNELL CAREER SERVICES - 103 Barnes Hall

Judy Jensvold, Senior Associate Director, Health Careers

Phone: 255-0542 E-mail: jmj5@cornell.edu

Gene Burpee, Career Counselor

Phone: 255-3559 E-mail: egb7@cornell.edu

AMERICAN INDIAN PROGRAM - 450 Caldwell Hall

Scott Templin, Student Services Associate

Phone: 255-3121 E-mail: sat82@cornell.edu

ARTS & SCIENCES ADMISSIONS & ADVISING - 438 Rockefeller Hall

Juliette Corazon, Assistant Dean/A&S Academic Advising Center

Phone: 255-9497 E-mail: jr272@cornell.edu

CORNELL ABROAD - 300 Caldwell Hall

Richard Gaulton, Director Cornell Abroad

Phone: 255-6224 E-mail: rhg7@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY - S2 012 Schurman Hall

Jennifer Mailey, Director of Admissions/ VM Admissions

Phone: 253-3702 E-mail: jam333@cornell.edu

Early Guarantee Program at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell

Highly qualified students may apply in the spring of their sophomore year for early admission to Cornell's D.V.M. professional program. Outstanding academic performance in the first two years of college can guarantee admission at the completion of their junior year or, if they chose, after graduation with a baccalaureate degree. With their professional education assured, students are free to plan an undergraduate curriculum that broadens their education or focuses on a specialized interest.

Application requirements for early admission are the same as for other applicants, except that candidates for early admission must also have a "B" or better in all prerequisite courses and must take the GRE and have the scores submitted before the May 1st deadline. There is only one application to complete in the spring admissions process (the VMCAS is not available at this time). Students should follow the link for Cornell's on-line application, www.vet.cornell.edu/admissions/howtoapply.htm.

The application and evaluation process for the program are as follows:

1. College sophomores are eligible to apply in the spring of their second year for admission after their third year. A deferral will be permitted should the student wish to complete a baccalaureate program.
2. Applications are available in March each year with a deadline of May 1. Supplemental information, such as letters of evaluation and transcripts from all colleges are required. Visit the College of Veterinary Medicine's admissions web site for details or email us at: vet_admissions@cornell.edu.
3. The application and prerequisite requirements are the same as for the other applicants, except that all prerequisite courses must have been completed with a grade of B or better. Students who have not satisfied all of the prerequisite coursework must complete it before the end of spring term prior to matriculation.
4. The GRE or MCAT must be in the admissions office by the May 1st deadline. Cornell's GRE code number is 2549. MCAT code number is 993.
5. The evaluation process is the same as for other applicants except for the timetable which is:
 - a. May 1 Deadline for applications
 - b. June 15 Spring semester grades due in DVM Admissions office
 - c. July 15 Notification of acceptance/denial
6. Any questions? Contact the Office of DVM Admissions (607) 253-3700 or vet_admissions@cornell.edu.

**Class Profiles and Applications:
College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell**

Class Profile

	Class of 2007	Class of 2008	Class of 2009	Class of 2010	Class of 2011
Median Age	23	23	22	22	23
Median GPA	3.65	3.74	3.71	3.72	3.69
Median Yrs. of Ed.	5.31	5.00	5.00	5.3	
Median GRE Total Score	1315	1320	1300	1330	1300
GRE-Verbal	605	590	590	600	560
GRE-Quantitative	710	730	710	730	740
Male	15	21	21	14	28
Female	69	65	65	72	58
New York	49	49	49	49	54
Contract	6	6	6	6	6
Other	29	31	31	31	26
Cornell	23	23	25	22	21
Non-Cornell	61	63	61	64	65
Biology	38	45	41	39	
Ag./Animal Science	30	25	29	26	
Other	16	16	16	21	

Applications

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
STATE					
New York	242	226	241	255	238
Contract (NJ & NH)	70	68	74	6	84
Other	492	433	556	592	565
TOTAL	804	727	871	853	887