

Pre-Veterinary Guide



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Preface

The information presented in this document provides important resources for UT Austin students planning to apply to veterinary medicine school.

Additional pre-health professions resources including prerequisites, timelines and application information for the following health professions: medical, dentistry, physician assistant studies, pharmacy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and optometry can be found on the Health Professions website:

<http://cns.utexas.edu/health-professions>.

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM)

To become a veterinarian, individuals must earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree* from a college or university accredited by the Council on Education of the [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#) and receive a state license. In order to obtain state licensure, the individual must first pass the [North American Veterinary Licensing Examination \(NAVLE\)](#). Many states also require a state-specific exam covering state laws and regulations. As post-graduate students, many veterinarians go on to complete 3-4 year residencies in order to become board certified in a [specialty area of veterinary medicine](#).

Veterinary medicine encompasses the full scope of animal health and disease, including the sciences and arts of disease prevention, diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy.

The majority of veterinarians work in direct animal care. However, others choose to work in laboratory testing or research. For more information about a career in veterinary medicine, visit:

<http://www.aavmc.org/data/images/career%20brochure%20-%20web.pdf>

**The School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania awards the only Veterinariae Medicinal Doctoris (VMD) in the U.S. (Other schools award the DVM.) The VMD is equivalent to a DVM.*

Selecting a Major

So what should you major in at UT? A common myth is that you have to major in a science degree as a Pre-Vet student. We recommend that you choose a degree based on your interests rather than one that you think looks good to veterinary schools. Choose a major that you are passionate about.

While certain degrees may cover the Pre-Vet prerequisites, completing the prerequisites for vet school can be accomplished regardless of your major. Vet schools also accept students who show broad interests in their academic coursework through non-science majors. Consider choosing a major that may serve as an alternate career path in case you change your mind about vet school.

Explore majors/health professions further at one or more of the following resources:

- WayFinder: <https://wayfinder.utexas.edu/career-fields/healthcare>
- My Next Move: <http://www.mynextmove.org/>
- Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/home.htm>
- Explore Health Careers: <http://explorehealthcareers.org/en/home>

Pre-Vet Self-Assessment

The assessment below is designed to assess vet school application strengths. If you are a new Pre-Vet student, use this assessment as a planning guide for your Pre-Vet pathway. Check out the New-Pre Health Students page on the Health Professions Office website: <http://cns.utexas.edu/health-professions> under Current Students.

Are you working towards submitting a well-rounded application?

Start by Developing Your Personal Qualities

Individuals who are successful in their pursuit of a health care career possess qualities that they develop as young adults. These include: good judgment, self-discipline, leadership/accountability, reliability, motivation/persistence, honesty, maturity, compassion/empathy, integrity, intellectual curiosity, strong work ethic, and cultural competency. Develop these qualities through the experiences and activities you choose to get involved with.

I want to develop the following qualities:

How am I going to develop these qualities? (Be specific!)

Here are some ideas to get you started:

Get Involved & Gain Experience

There are several ways you can get involved. First off, get involved in what you are interested in! Things that you can do to build your application include but are not limited to: volunteering, shadowing, studying abroad, and/or participating in a summer program. Get involved on campus, tutor, mentor, teach, participate in Rec Sports- the list goes on and on! If you are considering studying abroad, check out the study abroad section in this guide.

Quick Tip:

Keep track of any activities you are involved in. Record the hours, dates, your role/tasks, supervisor, location, etc. Programs like Microsoft Word or Excel are helpful! You will be asked to enter this type of information on your vet school application.

Community Service

Professional school admissions committees will look favorably upon any experience in which you are giving back to the community. A community service activity where you are directly helping animals or people face-to-face is of the most value, and making an ongoing commitment to that service gives you time to grow and gain real value from the experience.

Volunteer Experience	Dates (can list time period or individual dates)	Hours	Responsibilities

What have I learned about myself through these experiences?

Have I involved myself in a diverse set of experiences? What skills have I developed/demonstrated through these experiences? For example: "I have become a better communicator through my volunteering experiences at a veterinary office's front desk." Then, explain how you have done this. Be specific about your communication skills

I want to explore the following volunteer activities:

Quick Tip:

It is a good idea to balance your volunteering and make sure that some of your volunteering is in a veterinary setting. Note that Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine requires that one of your evaluators be a veterinarian who can comment on what you did while working for him or her.

Shadowing

Shadowing means observing a veterinary medicine provider in their clinical setting. Shadowing gives you the opportunity to learn how they plan their day, how they interact with their patients (and their owners), how they chose their career, and how they feel about current events.

Veterinarian Name or Name of Practice/Clinic	Specialty	Hours	Type of Experience: Shadow/Volunteer/Paid

What have I learned from these experiences?

I want to reach out to the following veterinarians to ask about shadowing:

Quick Tip

Finding a veterinarian who is willing to allow you to shadow can be a challenge, but it is worth the effort. Many students start with personal connections. You may also network with other Pre-Vet students to see where they have shadowed.

Veterinary and Animal Experience

Veterinary experience specifically refers to activities supervised by a vet such as helping out in a clinical setting or direct care under a vet in a research setting. Animal experience refers to work with animals that is not supervised by a vet such as 4-H projects or volunteering at an animal shelter.

Note: Texas A&M requires that applicants have **over 100 hours of veterinary experience** in order to qualify for an interview. Always check their [website](#) as this can change.

Experience/Organization	Veterinary or Animal Experience	Hours	Responsibilities

What have I learned about myself through these experiences?

Have I involved myself in a diverse set of experiences? What skills have I developed/demonstrated through these experiences? For example: "I have become a better communicator through my volunteering experiences at a veterinary office's front desk." Then, explain how you have done this. Be specific about your communication skills

I want to explore the following volunteer activities:

Leadership

Leadership can be developed in many different ways. Think about how you are developing leadership qualities and skills. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Teaching/TA a course
- Involvement in student organizational leadership

Name of Organization	Position/title (ex. Communication Director, President, Member, etc.)	Total participation time (ex. 2 years, 3 semesters, etc.)	Duties/activities participated in with this organization

What is the most important thing I have learned about myself from these experiences? What leadership skills do I have?

What are some specific leadership skills I still need to develop/demonstrate and ways I can develop your leadership skills:

Student Organization Involvement

Participation helps you become a well-rounded student because you develop not only knowledge and thinking skills but also social skills, group work, empathy, team building, organizational and motivational skills.

I am active in the following student organizations (list role, skills, values, and qualities demonstrated):

I want to be active in the following student organizations (explain why):

Quick Tip:

There are over 1,000 registered student organizations on campus. There are close to 30 health-related organizations. Check the Office of the Dean of Students HornsLink website (<https://utexas.collegiatelink.net/Organizations>) for a searchable database of student orgs.

Academics

Academics include your overall and Biology-Chemistry-Physics-Math (BCPM) GPAs and GRE Scores. Are you keeping your grades up? Are you taking between 14-17 credit hours per semester? Use the GPA calculator in your UT Direct account to figure out your GPA.

BCPM GPA* (Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Math - *also includes Statistics*): _____

Overall GPA*: _____

*Includes courses taken at UT and other institutions. All college level credits count.

Quick Tip

To be competitive for veterinary school, you will need average overall and BCPM GPAs of at least 3.6 to 3.8 and above, depending on the schools you plan to apply to. This means you need to be making As and Bs with more As than Bs. If you are behind in your classes, don't wait until you get your first poor test score to ask for help. See the academic assistance section of this guide.

My GRE Score: _____

Verbal Reasoning: _____ Quantitative Reasoning: _____ Analytical Writing: _____

Quick Tip

On the current GRE, you will want to aim for scores in the 155 - 160 range for the Verbal and Quantitative sections and approximately a 4 for the Analytical section. For additional information, review the GRE section of this guide. [Sanger Learning Center](#) also has resources on GRE prep.

Some schools also require the Biology GRE. If you are planning to apply to out-of-state schools, make sure to check school websites for additional requirements.

Get in the Habit of Personal Reflection

Your insights about who you are as a person and how your experiences have shaped you will be of tremendous benefit when it is time to write your personal statement (a required part of your professional school application) and interview. Keep a journal handy so you can jot down your thoughts and observations! Consider keeping an annotated log of your experience hours.

Track Your Progress

What does a veterinarian do?

What characteristics do I have that will help me be an excellent veterinary medical student and veterinarian?

Have I had experience working with people from backgrounds different from my own? What impact has that had on me?

Why do I want to be a veterinarian?

Can you go beyond loving science and wanting to help? Remember, there are many helping professions out there. Why this one?

Get to Know Your Faculty

This can be challenging at UT Austin—the campus is large and most of the classes in your first year have large numbers of participants. Even though the professors can sometimes seem tough or intimidating, most of them are very approachable one-on-one. Participate in your professors' office hours, even if you are doing well in their class. It will make your request for a future letter of evaluation much easier! Get to know your faculty, check out the video on the HPO YouTube page for some tips!

Who are your letter writers?

I would like to ask the following faculty for letters of evaluation:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

I would like to ask the following third letter writer for a letter of evaluation (**TMDAS/Texas A&M requires that one evaluator be a veterinarian**); this letter will add a different dimension to my application:

- 1) _____

**Once you have completed this self-assessment, if you have not spoken with a Health Professions Office coach either through attending drop-in sessions or during an appointment, we recommend that you do so in order to discuss these topics as well as your application strengths as a whole. Check out the last page of this guide for additional information on services offered by the Health Professions Office.*

Notes:

Pre-Veterinary Prerequisites Timeline

This is a recommended timeline. There are many different pathways to veterinary school, and many students are not ready to apply after the third year of undergraduate school. Many take an additional year to prepare for vet school, applying in the summer after the fourth year, and then have a year in between undergraduate and vet school. Regardless of your plans, this timeline models the possible sequencing of courses.

This is an example of a typical 3 year plan to be used with the prerequisite courses pdf and the individual veterinary school websites

[Requirements can change at any time. Check often for updates and review application service and school web sites for changes that may occur between updates.]

YEAR 1	<u>Fall</u> Biology I Chemistry I Rhetoric	<u>Spring</u> Chemistry II Chemistry lab Biology II	<u>Summer</u>
YEAR 2	<u>Fall</u> Genetics Biology lab Organic Chemistry I English Literature	<u>Spring</u> Organic Chemistry II Organic Chemistry lab Statistics	<u>Summer</u> Animal Nutrition * [GRE Admissions Exam]
YEAR 3	<u>Fall</u> Biochemistry Physics I Physics I Lab Speech	<u>Spring</u> Physics II Physics II lab Microbiology Microbiology lab	<u>Summer</u> [Apply in June]
YEAR 4	<u>Fall</u> Additional courses required or recommended by individual schools Continue in pre-veterinary, community service, and leadership activities.	<u>Spring</u>	

* Animal Nutrition is not offered at UT-Austin. See the [TAMU-CVM website](#) for courses offered at other schools that satisfy this requirement.

Pre-Vet Activities

FIRST & SECOND YEARS

- + Subscribe to the *HPOinfo Emails* [here](#).
- + Take an average to heavy course load: 14-16 hours is considered a normal pre-vet course load. It is okay to take 12-13 hours your first semester at UT Austin.
- + Get to know your professors. You will need faculty evaluations when you apply to veterinary schools. Two from science faculty are recommended.
- + Find an opportunity to work closely with a veterinarian. One of the three letters of evaluation needs to be from a veterinarian.
- + Get experience with both large and small animals.
- + Meet with a Health Professions Office peer or coach to discuss your career goals, preparation, and how to make the most out of your first two years.
- + Get involved in extracurricular activities (e.g., student organizations, volunteering, and community service).
- + Declare a major by your second year on campus.
- + Be sure your major code indicates that you are a pre-vet student. This is indicated by a "14" (code for pre-med, pre-dent, and pre-vet students) at the end of your major code (e.g. E00114).
- + Attend the Health Professions Fair each year, generally held in February or March, to visit with school representatives.
- + Explore viable career alternatives and keep your career options open.

Can I Take Courses Away from UT?

Completing your coursework at UT (your home institution) is considered best preparation for health professions schools. For students who find it necessary to take courses away from UT, we offer the following recommendations.

KEY: UT: Take classes at UT Austin
 4YR: If necessary, okay to take class at other 4 year institution
 CC: If necessary, okay to take class at community college

	Pre-Medical	Pre-Dental	Pre-Veterinary	Pre-Optometry	Pre-Pharmacy	Pre-Physician Asst	Pre-Physical Therapy	Pre-Occupational Therapy
Biology & Chemistry	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT
Physics	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR or CC	Not Required	4YR or CC	4YR or CC
Statistics, Calculus	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR or CC	4YR or CC	4YR or CC	4YR or CC
English & Rhetoric	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR or CC	4YR or CC	4YR or CC
Other Pre-requisites	Generally, it seems to be okay to take other prereqs away from UT Austin, if needed; however, students should contact individual professional schools' admission offices for questions about specific courses.							

General Recommendations:

1. Taking courses away from UT can give the impression that the student is avoiding UT Austin's rigorous courses; therefore, it is important to earn excellent grades at both community colleges and other four-year institutions.
2. It generally appears to be okay with professional schools to take government and history requirements at other four-year institutions or community colleges.
3. For other general requirements students can check with professional schools' admission offices.

Studying Abroad?

Most health professions schools require that prerequisites be taken at U.S. accredited schools, and some will accept credits from Canadian accredited schools.

Although exchange program courses and some affiliated program courses are counted as in-residence credit by UT Austin, according to Texas state law, foreign course work cannot be counted in the GPAs for application to graduate and post-baccalaureate professional schools. The rules and policies can vary among the professional schools. Students who plan to study abroad should research this carefully for the schools and application services they plan to apply to. Look in the education requirements, transcripts, and FAQ sections of their websites for information about foreign course work and study abroad. For example, see TMDAS's response below.

UT Austin faculty-led courses are "in-residence" courses as well as U.S. credits, and so courses like Organic Chemistry II (CH 320N) taught in Spain by UT Austin faculty can be used to satisfy a prerequisite. However, for many students, taking these rigorous courses in only 5 weeks may not be recommended. It is important that pre-health professions students master these courses and retain this knowledge for success in entrance exams and in advanced studies.

The UT Austin Health Professions Office very strongly recommends that our students satisfy their health professions prerequisites at UT Austin. Use the study abroad opportunity to study the culture and language of that country and to satisfy general education requirements if approved by your academic advisor. Science courses that are not considered direct preparation for the health professions can be considered as well. (Examples: research, ecology, environmental science; but NOT cell, molecular, micro, anatomy, physiology which figure heavily into your preparation and readiness for professional school and the admissions committee's assessment of your application)

Does TMDAS accept foreign coursework?

By state law, foreign coursework is not included in the calculation of the admission GPA. Transcripts from foreign schools will be forwarded to the schools so they can be evaluated based on criteria established by the Admissions Committee at the respective school. Course work taken at foreign institutions must be evaluated for US equivalence by one of the evaluation services on TMDAS.

For full content on the TMDAS website see:

http://www.tmdsas.com/veterinary/application_instructions.html

What about Claiming AP/IB Credit for Prerequisites?

While we generally recommend that as a pre-health student you not "claim" AP/IB credit for prerequisite courses such as biology, chemistry, English, physics, and mathematics, these are important decisions that you must make and that require your careful consideration.

It may seem like a convenient way to eliminate hours from your degree plan and accelerate your path to professional school, but claiming credit can actually be detrimental to your preparation for success on entrance exams and in professional studies. Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses vary in rigor, and they are generally not equivalent to the rigor of UT Austin courses. However, your AP/IB courses can be very good preparation for taking these courses at UT Austin, providing the opportunity to master that material, become better prepared, enhance your GPA, and demonstrate your academic ability and readiness for advanced study in health professions schools.

Unless you are academically very well prepared, it is best to start with the introductory courses. Please consult with your academic advisor for help in determining your readiness for higher level science courses. Most schools that accept AP/IB credit will expect you to take additional upper-division course work in that area of study.

Here are some specific recommendations:

Science Courses

Biology and Chemistry

If you claim credit in courses like Biology I and Biology II, you may not be adequately prepared for the rigorous next course here at UT Austin (Genetics). If you claim credit for Chemistry I and Chemistry II, your first college level chemistry course at UT Austin will be Organic Chemistry I.

Honors students in biology and chemistry may claim test credit, register in the honors sequence for biology or chemistry, and will take additional upper-division credits in those areas, making up for the lack of first-year hours in those disciplines.

Your UT Austin faculty will expect you to be prepared to learn and understand the material conceptually and theoretically in order to understand test questions well enough to earn As on your exams. They will teach material beyond the textbook that was not presented in your high school courses. You will be in second year courses with many students who took General Biology and General Chemistry here and are well prepared to handle the exams in the more advanced courses. They will set the standard for the grade scale or curve in your classes.

Physics

Physics is required to prepare for some health professions schools. In some cases, you will be tested on physics in your professional school entrance exam. We strongly recommend taking physics at the college level if you are preparing for a professional school that requires physics.

Calculus and Statistics

For the Texas medical schools, if you take statistics in the classroom here at UT Austin, you can use statistics to satisfy the math prerequisite. Then if your degree plan or any of your science courses require calculus, you can decide with your academic advisor whether to use credit-by-exam or take the course(s) in the classroom.

For all health professions schools, both in Texas and out-of-state, it is important to check their admissions web sites for any restrictions and preferences on credit-by-exam.

Non-Science Courses

It is usually acceptable to claim credit-by-exam for general education or core curriculum requirements such as history and government. Claiming this type of credit may give you time to take the courses that will prepare you for professional school and school entrance exams. On the other hand, critical thinking skills and an understanding of ethics, society, community, cultures, history, and human behavior are important for your success now and throughout your professional and personal life. Taking college level courses is a good way to develop these areas of knowledge.

English Literature, Rhetoric, Writing

If you claim credit for freshman writing and literature courses, we recommend taking additional courses in the classroom at the college level. Even if your high school verbal skills were strong, this type of academic skill weakens over time if you do not use it.

Verbal skills are extremely important to your success in your undergraduate course work, your entrance exams, in professional school, and as a health care professional. You must be able to read efficiently, at a good rate, with high comprehension and critical thinking skills. You must develop and maintain a good vocabulary, not just for the sciences but also for social and behavioral sciences, ethics, policies and regulations, and procedural information. Many admissions deans recommend reading well-written novels in addition to your textbook material.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Although TMSAS does accept AP credit for admission, **some out-of-state schools** do not. These schools vary in their policies and perspectives on credit-by-exam. TMSAS recommends taking additional upper-division courses in the same subject area to make up for using AP credits for prerequisite courses.

Check individual school admissions web sites or contact their admissions offices to be sure about each school's expectations. Taking courses in the college classroom will help you to compete for admission and to succeed in professional school. We strongly recommend that you use these courses as building blocks that will be the foundation for your future career.

To Q or Not to Q (or to switch to pass/fail)

No admissions committee for any health professional school likes to see "Q drops" on a transcript. This is an indication that something became too much for you to handle and that you chose to drop the course rather than see it through. There are times when the Q-drop is the best course of action, however, keep reading to see how your choice may affect your competitiveness for professional school.

More of a problem if:

1. **Q-dropping is a pattern on your transcript.** Two Q-drops can signal a possible pattern; three Q-drops create a definite pattern.
2. **It occurs in a context of inconsistent grades.** To be competitive for professional school, you should be making A's and B's with more A's than B's. If you have semesters which include B's and C's – even one or two C's, your grades are inconsistent by a professional school's standard.
3. **It's one of your prerequisite courses for professional school.** In this case, you might consider sticking with the class on a pass/fail basis. Then you only need to earn a D to earn credit. **Check with your academic advisor** about whether you can use the pass/fail option.
4. **It's any science-based course,** since the bulk of professional school curriculum will be science based.

Less of a problem if:

1. **It's the only Q-drop on your transcript at time of application to professional school.** You will want to choose wisely however, depending on the course. If you are taking a lower division or introductory course, keep in mind that upper division courses will be more challenging. You may want to hold on to that "one and only Q-drop" for later.
2. **It's a non-science course.** While professional schools want you to do well in all classes, they are likely to be less concerned if you dropped a sociology or business class.

What if there are non-academic reasons for needing to Q-drop?

Sometimes personal or family emergencies and other special circumstances make it difficult to find time for and focus on your studies. Sometimes for new students it is difficult to make the transition to UT. If you are dealing with something that is getting in the way of your school work, it is very important that you get help.

1. Talk to your academic advisor and/or an advisor in your college student division office.
2. Check out the support services at the [Counseling and Mental Health Center](#).

When is switching to pass/fail a better option?

This should really only be undertaken when you are reasonably certain that you can pass the class, in other words, earn at least a D. An F from a pass/fail course is just the same as an F from a letter grade course. If you are taking a pre-requisite course that you must repeat (and you meet the above criteria of being reasonably sure you can pass), you should consider the pass/fail option. This will allow you to continue your exposure to the material for the entire semester. This will create a much stronger foundation when you repeat the course.

What if I keep the class and then I make a C or lower?

No one wants to explain a poor grade in a class, but there is actually much to be learned about being responsible for your grades (see exercise below) Talking about how you might change your strategy going forward can be not only a sign of maturity and integrity, it can also demonstrate your resilience. All of these qualities are important to future health professionals.

What did you learn from this experience?

While it can be tempting to blame others for the need to Q drop a class, you must understand that the responsibility is 100% yours. To help you identify your responsibility, ask yourself these questions.

1. Could I have met with the professor to see what I could do to improve my understanding?
2. (If my professor was difficult to understand or hard for me to follow) Did I look for other sections of the courses to sit in on so that I could learn the material in a different way?
3. Could I have identified that I needed assistance earlier in the semester? (In time to have possibly salvaged my grade)
4. Could I have managed my time better so that I had appropriate time to devote to the class?
5. Could I have checked out resources for tutoring through the Sanger Learning Center?
6. Could I have adjusted my priorities (lowering especially those which are non-academic) to allow focus on my studies?

Preparing for the possible professional school interview question

You will want to spend some time reflecting on what you could have done differently so that you did not have to drop the class (see above). If you are asked about the Q-drop, you should be able to explain where things went wrong, what you learned from the experience, and how you might choose differently in the future. Remember the Health Professions Office does provide tips in the interview prep appointment and can help you practice your response

Academic Assistance

[Sanger Learning Center](#) is great place to go if you need assistance succeeding academically. They have tips and appointments centered around the following:

Academic Support

Utilizing Faculty Office Hours

Visiting with Your Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Improving Your Study Skills

Course-specific Study Groups

GRE Information

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required by most veterinary schools. Some schools also require the Biology GRE. The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is accepted by some schools in place of the GRE. Check individual school websites for required admissions exam(s).

About the GRE

The GRE is composed of three sections*:

Verbal Reasoning – Measures your ability to analyze and evaluate written material and synthesize information obtained from it, analyze relationships among component parts of sentences and recognize relationships among words and concepts.

Quantitative Reasoning – Measures problem-solving ability using basic concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis.

Analytical Writing – Measures critical thinking and analytical writing skills, specifically your ability to articulate and support complex ideas clearly and effectively.

For information on test dates and registration, visit https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/.

*Information provided by <https://www.ets.org/gre>.

Preparing for the GRE

There are many books, online resources and courses to help you prepare for the GRE. Some of the most popular include:

ETS, maker of the GRE: https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/prepare/

Kaplan: <http://www.kaptest.com/gre>

Need a GPA Booster?

A post-baccalaureate program is for students who have already completed an undergraduate degree and are interested in a health professions career. They either need to finish pre-requisite courses or improve their academic standing for a more competitive professional school application.

What Different Post-Bacc Programs are Available?

Essentially there are two different types of programs for students hoping to attend veterinary school (or another health-related professional school):

Basic Sciences: This type of program is for students who have not completed the basic requirements for veterinary school. Generally this is for “career changers” who have decided to pursue a career in veterinary medicine. The coursework can be done in a formal post-bacc program or independently at a college or university of your choice.

Advanced Sciences/GPA Boosters: This type of program is designed for students who were science majors or have completed the basic science requirements, but:

- Need to raise their GPA to become a more competitive veterinary school applicant.
- Want to stay academically engaged during a gap year while applying to veterinary school.

How Do I Get In to a Post-Bacc Program?

Selection criteria vary among schools. Most programs require at least a 3.0 GPA. You will likely be required to submit a standardized test scores – GRE or MCAT. Minimum test scores accepted will vary by school. Applications for the fall semester are usually due by March of that year, however applying within two months after application opens is highly recommended. Check with individual programs so as not to miss deadlines

Follow this link for a list of programs around Texas: <https://cns.utexas.edu/health-professions/current-student-resources/gap-year-planning>

Follow this link for a list of programs around the United States. Compiled by the Association of American Medical Colleges, most programs are also appropriate for veterinary medicine preparation: <https://apps.aamc.org/postbac/#/index>

Research Schools Before You Apply!

Thinking about what type of veterinary school is best for you? Not sure what you want in a school? Check out the following possible criteria for evaluating a veterinary school’s fit for you.

1. Size of your cohort
2. Training facilities & local affiliations
3. Support programs – tutoring, counseling, student health services, childcare
4. Community-building, student organizations
5. Options for financial aid/scholarship
6. Outreach/service to community
7. Family/friends (support in close proximity)
8. Lifestyle – outdoorsy, city vs. rural, cultural arts, etc.
9. Centers/institutes/programs that align with your veterinary school goals

10. Prestige of the institution

Other resources to explore:

In-state Schools:

There is one veterinary medical school in Texas where one can earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree:

Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences College Station, Texas
<https://vetmed.tamu.edu/>& <https://vetmed.tamu.edu/dvm/>

Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine Amarillo, Texas
<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/vetschool/> &
<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/vetschool/admissions/application-process/>

Formal application for Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine (TAMU-CVM) & Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine must be filed between May 1st and October 1st, through the **Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS)**. We recommend applying by the end of June and no later than the end of July the summer before graduation.

A **Graduate Record Examination (GRE)** score including the Analytical section is required. GRE scores should be submitted directly to the veterinary school. Because the application is not complete until the GRE scores are received by the school, applicants should take the GRE no later than May of the application year.

Out-of-state Schools:

Veterinary Medical School Admissions Requirements ([VMSAR](#))

Compiled by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), this guide provides an overview of the admission process for both national and international veterinary schools that are members of the AAVMC.

For each member schools, the book provides:

- Summary of application procedures
- Requirements for application and residency
- Prerequisites for admission
- Deadlines for the application process
- Description of campus and campus life
- Cost of tuition and fees

The guide also includes an overview of the Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS), details about the accreditation of vet schools and professional licensure, a timeline for individuals interested in veterinary school, and firsthand accounts from current students and practitioners about training to become a vet.

List the schools you wish to apply to, by interest:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

Follow the Timeline for Applying to Veterinary School

This is a recommended timeline for students to follow during the year preceding application submission.

Fall Semester	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin compiling a list of experiences; include details such as dates, hours, tasks, responsibilities, and what you learned/strengths/skills you developed/demonstrated • Brainstorm and begin drafting personal statement and optional essays (Schedule a Personal Statement Brainstorming appointment) • Ask evaluators for letters of evaluation • Research schools to determine where to apply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TMDSAS application opens ~May 1 • Obtain official transcripts from all institutions attended for your own use. Review for accuracy of information and use as reference for completing application • Print and read application service instructions; Make a plan or “to do” checklist or spreadsheet • Read instructions about score reporting; these vary year-to-year and by schools • Request transcripts from all institutions attended to be sent to application services per application instructions • Finish application essays • Submit when application is complete (this includes your spring grades) and you are confident you’ve done your best! (Earlier is better!)
January	June/July
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those who are ready, take GRE; We recommend taking the GRE no later than May. (GRE score is valid for 5 years so it can be taken early) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit when application is complete (this includes your spring grades) and you are confident you’ve done your best! (Earlier is better – ideally by end of June) • Complete and submit secondary applications (if required); applications are not complete until secondary applications are submitted
February/March	August/September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Health Professions Fair, usually held in February or March to visit with professional schools and have a professional headshot taken for your application • Complete personal statement and have it reviewed by the undergraduate writing center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule Interview Prep Appointment with HPO • Interviews can begin in early Fall for some schools
April	October
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send friendly reminder to letter writers at the end of the month if they have not already submitted letters of evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing continues into the spring semester • Deadline to submit TMDSAS is October 1 (Earlier is better - we encourage submitting by end of June)

Application Services

There are two application services that you will use to apply to veterinary medical school in the United States.

- Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS)
 - Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine
- Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS)

Texas Veterinary College Application Service

[TMDSAS](#) is the application service for the Texas public medical, dental, and veterinary schools. Use this application service to apply to Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine.

Completion of a secondary application is also required for Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine: <https://vethospital.tamu.edu/>

American Veterinary College Application Service

[VMCAS](#) is the application service you will use to apply to all out-of-state veterinary medical colleges. Check out their website for details on the application process including prerequisites, FAQs and other application requirements.

Many schools require a supplemental/secondary application. Visit the school's website to determine their requirements. Links to the VMCAS colleges' websites can be found here: http://aavmc.org/College-Specific-Requirements/College-Specific-Requirements_College-Specifications.aspx

Considering an International Vet School?

Things to consider...

- Why international vet school? What strengths/attributes do you possess that will enable you to overcome additional difficulties such as difficult living conditions, less extensive learning resources, more limited teaching and clinical facilities, etc.?
- Foreign veterinary graduates can apply to the Veterinary Internship & Residency Matching Program (VIRMP), the system utilized for many residencies. However, some programs will first require completion of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination.
- Make sure you are knowledgeable about any post graduate/post residency requirements
- Does the university accept UT pre-vet prerequisites?

Make sure the school...

- Is accredited and respected: The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) provides a list of accredited programs: [Accredited Colleges of Veterinary Medicine](#).
- Follows ethical guidelines.
- Prepares you for certification/licensure. Each individual state licensing board is responsible for determining the eligibility of the student to take the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE). Check with the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medicine and any other state4s of interest about eligibility for licensure and additional requirements you may face.

Letters of Evaluation

Letters are key pieces to your professional school application. TMDSAS currently requires three evaluation letters. **One evaluation must be completed by a veterinarian.** Evaluators will complete the [Texas A&M Veterinary Evaluation Form](#). Forms will be submitted directly to TMDSAS.

The number and type of letters needed vary from school to school. For additional details and guidelines check with TMDSAS or AADSAS. Check out HPO's YouTube Channel for tips in a video on "Getting to Know Your Faculty Members."

- TMDSAS [instructions](#) to help applicants
- Review resources on [HPO's Application Resources page](#)

Writing Your Personal Statement

PERSONAL STATEMENT BRAINSTORMING & CONTENT PLANNING

Please read the Personal Statement resources below and then you are welcome to meet with a Pre-Health Professions Coach to discuss your ideas before starting your personal statement.

FIND & READ YOUR ESSAY PROMPT BEFORE STARTING

- [TMDSAS](#) Application Essay Prompts
- Other Application Essay Prompts: Find your prompt before you start - [website links](#)

TOOLS TO HELP YOU BUILD YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

- View HPO's [Application Resources](#) page for a list of action verbs, a strengths and skills word list, and much more to help you prepare your materials.

PERSONAL STATEMENT & ESSAY WRITING, REVISING, REVIEW & FEEDBACK

The [University Writing Center](#) is an excellent resource to utilize when writing application essays. Ask to see a Writing Consultant trained by the HPO on HP Personal Statements who can help you at any stage of writing, from getting started to making recommendations for a polished finished product.

Interview Tips and Preparation

It is important to present yourself professionally to an admissions committee. From what to wear to anticipating what questions you might be asked, our Health Professions Office coaches can help you prepare for your professional school interview.

Find helpful information on the Interviewing tab of the [HPO Application Resources page](#).

Dress Professionally:

- View our Dressing Guide <http://tinyurl.com/InterviewDressGuide>

Practice Improving Your Interview Skills:

- Schedule an Interview Prep appointment with a Pre-Health Professions Coach by visiting our office or calling our front desk (512-471-3172)
- View HPO's [Application Resources](#) page for a post-interview self-evaluation form as well as other resources

Prepare & Practice

Be prepared to discuss your strengths and weaknesses, obstacles and inspirations, current events and personal attributes. The following sample questions are meant to provide you with a better understanding of why the interviewer might be asking the questions that they do. By asking you certain questions, interviewers are attempting to gain a better understanding of your personality and your readiness for professional school and the particular profession

- What kind of community/volunteer work have you done?
- What is the most rewarding experience of your life?
- What types of animals are you most interested in working with?
- How do you handle stress?
- What would you do if an animal you were treating showed obvious signs of animal abuse?
- How do you feel about euthanasia?
- What characteristics does a good veterinarian possess?
- What current event in veterinary medicine have you heard about or have been following?
- What are the advantages and limitations that you see going into veterinary medicine?
- What problems do you predict that veterinary medicine will face in the next decade?
- Who is your favorite author?
- Have you worked while you have been in school?
- Have you had the opportunity to travel abroad?
- What accomplishment are you most proud of?
- Tell me about the most difficult period of your life. How did you deal with this?
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- What is the most difficult decision that you've had to make?
- How do you plan to finance your veterinary school education?
- How are you going to decide which veterinary school to attend?
- How do you handle adversity?
- Why should we pick you instead of someone else?
- Why do you want to be a veterinarian?
- What will you do if you are not accepted to veterinary school?
- When did you first decide that you wanted to pursue a career in veterinary medicine? Was there a specific cause for your decision? Has anything happened since that time to strengthen or weaken your decision?
- Can you see other careers in which you could achieve the same goals or meet the same needs?
- What steps have you taken to find out more about veterinary medicine as a career?
- If accepted to veterinary school, what field of veterinary medicine would you prefer?
- Where would you like to start practicing?
- How do you study? How do you manage your time?
- What courses do you find most enjoyable, most difficult? Why?
- Describe your hobbies and interests.
- Describe your best/least favorite course at UT and why it falls into that category.
- Why did you choose _____ as your major?
- Are there any questions you would like to ask me?
- Describe a situation where you've worked with people from different backgrounds.
- What type of person do you enjoy being with? What type of person irritates you most and how have you dealt with these types of people?
- What about yourself would you most like the interviewer to know?

Financing Your Veterinary Education

For more information about financing a veterinary education, visit [AVMA's Financing Your Veterinary Medical Education](#).

To find out about tuition and fees at specific veterinary schools, check out the [AAVMC Member Institution Tuition Map](#).

FAFSA: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Research the cost of living at veterinary school locations, consider your financial obligations, and create a budget to estimate the cost of attending veterinary school:

Add It Up! Don't forget to include all Living Costs (Cost of Attendance is often more than tuition alone.)	
Tuition:	
Rent:	
Food:	
Entertainment:	
Health Insurance:	
Laboratory Fees:	
Car Insurance:	
Gas:	
Other Travel:	
Other Expenses:	

Pre-Health Professions Services

Applying to Professional School? We are here to guide you!

See a HP Peer Coach if you have questions in one or more of the following topic areas:

- Going over pre-requisites ("What do I have to take to get into X school?")
- Shadowing opportunities ("how to find, importance of, what is")
- Leadership opportunities ("how to find, importance of, what are")
- Patient care experience ("how to find, importance of, what is")
- Clubs/organizations
- How to ask for letters of recommendation/evaluation
- Course load ("Is this reasonable to take in one semester?")
- Study habits/tutoring resources
- Test-taking strategies
- How to use HPO services

Pre-Health Professions Coaching Appointments

Schedule a Pre-Health Professions Coaching session to meet with a Pre-Health Professions Coach. These appointments cover:

- Progress checks ("How am I doing?; What else do I need to do?")
- Application Strategies/resources
- Choosing letter writers ("Who should I ask?")
- Academic turnaround ("I am worried about my GPA")
- Potential gap year planning/Post Bacc discussions
- Academic dishonesty/legal issues
- Reapplication strategies
- Study abroad timeline
- Alumni or Post Bacc Student questions

TO Q or NOT TO Q Discussions

Not sure what to do? Thinking of dropping a course? Then you can schedule an appointment with a Pre-Health Professions Coach about deciding on Q dropping or the pass/fail option. Check out our TO Q or NOT TO Q recommendations in this guide before your appointment.

Personal Statement Brainstorming

Meet with a Pre-Health Professions Coach to discuss your ideas before starting your personal statement. We will help you brainstorm ideas for the content of your essays. Read our personal statement resources [here](#) and prepare for your brainstorming appointment.

For help with writing application essays, the [University Writing Center](#) is an excellent resource. Ask to meet with a Writing Consultants who has trained with the HPO. They can help you at any stage of writing, from getting started to making recommendations for a polished finished product.

Interview Prep Appointments

Discuss interview strategies and practice an interview question if time allows. You will receive tips and feedback. Dressing up for your HP Interview Prep appointment is optional, if you would like feedback on your clothing choice and you want to test whether it will be comfortable, or the coach can just discuss appropriate attire with you if you have questions.