What is the study of Pre-Veterinary Medicine?

Admission into a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program is highly selective and includes evaluation of: GPA (both cumulative and science), standardized admission test scores (commonly GRE or MCAT), volunteer experience within the field, letters of recommendation, extracurricular and community activities, an interview, and also legal and social records.

Western offers undergraduate coursework that addresses prerequisites of most DVM programs but **veterinary programs vary in admissions requirements**. In general, applicants must have strong academic backgrounds in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics and English. Research schools of your choice to confirm all required courses. Prerequisites are summarized at [http://www.aavmc.org/data/files/vmcas/prereqchart.pdf](http://www.aavmc.org/data/files/vmcas/prereqchart.pdf).

Veterinary schools emphasize the importance of a liberal arts education and do not recruit students from one specific major or discipline. Although Western does not offer a Pre-Veterinary major, examples of popular majors among students are Biology, Environmental Science, Psychology, and Business. Majors of recent WWU graduates admitted into DVM programs include Behavioral Neuroscience, Biology, Chemistry, and English Literature.

**Program Checkpoints:**

**Freshman year:**
- Take Math Placement Test; begin appropriate math sequence to complete Calculus: MATH 124, 125.
- Begin General Chemistry series as soon as possible: CHEM 121, 122, 123.
- Begin General Biology series winter or spring quarter: BIOL 204, 205, 206.
- Work on GUR courses, including ENG 101 and COMM 101 or 224.
- Begin prerequisite and co-requisite courses for possible major.
- Meet with Pre-Healthcare Advisors (OM 280) to develop a plan of study.

**Sophomore year:**
- Begin Physics series: PHYS 114, 115, 116 or 161, 162, 163 (depending upon major).
- Begin Microbiology sophomore or junior year: BIOL 345, 346 (or BIOL 245).
- Take Stats class: MATH 240 (or equivalent in major, if offered).
- Take a second English composition course: ENG 201 or 202.
- Take Genetics sophomore or junior year: BIOL 321, 322.
- Declare or apply for major.
- Begin to shadow Veterinarians sophomore and/or junior year.

**Junior year:**
- Research veterinary schools and graduate programs.
- Begin Biochemistry: CHEM 471, 472.
- Depending upon schools, take Anatomy & Physiology: BIOL 348, 349 (or equivalent elsewhere).
- Take a third English composition course: Select from ENG 201, 202, 301 and 302.
- Depending upon schools, take additional Communication course: COMM 318 or 327.
- Depending upon schools, take Nutrition: HLED 350 (or equivalent elsewhere).
- Take appropriate admission test (GRE or MCAT) by the summer after junior year.
- Begin primary application to the Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS).
- Draft personal statement.
- Request letters of recommendation from professors and professionals.

**Senior year:**
- Prepare for possible veterinary school interview with a mock interview (or do spring of junior year).
- Complete major, GUR, WP, and other graduation requirements.
- Two quarters before graduation, meet with declared major advisor and apply for graduation.

**Note:**
- **Advanced Placement may not be recognized by professional schools as college-earned credit.** Check with each school.
- **GRE/MCAT:** Most veterinary schools require the Graduate Record Exam (GRE); some accept the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Applicants should test no later than August of the year preceding anticipated admission.
Core Courses

Course requirements for veterinary schools vary but, regardless of your major, certain prerequisites expected by most schools include:

- One year General Chemistry with labs: CHEM 121¹, 122, 123 (5 credits, 5, 4)
- One year General Biology w/labs: BIOL 204², 205, 206 (4, 5, 5)
- One year Organic Chemistry w/labs: CHEM 351, 352, 353 (4, 4, 3); labs: 354 and 355/[or 356 for non-Chemistry majors] (3, 3/[2])
- At least two quarters of Biochemistry: CHEM 471, 472 (4, 4)
- One year Physics w/labs: PHYS 114³, 115, 116 (5, 5, 5) or PHYS 161⁴, 162, 163 (5, 5, 5)
- Additional courses under advisement:
  - Genetics: BIOL 321, 322 (4 each) [Required by WSU]
  - Microbiology: BIOL 345, 346 (3, 2) [or BIOL 245 (5)]
  - Anatomy & Physiology: BIOL 348, 349 (5 each)
  - Nutrition: HLED 350 (3)
  - Interpersonal Communication: COMM 318 or 327 (5 each)
- Two quarters Calculus: MATH 124, 125 (5, 5)
- Statistics: MATH 240 (4) or a major equivalent
- One year of English is highly recommended; select from:
  - ENG 101, 201, 202, 301, or 302 (5 each)

¹Completion of MATH 114 or Math Placement into MATH 115 or higher is a prerequisite for CHEM 121
²CHEM 121 is a prerequisite to BIOL 204
³MATH 115 is a prerequisite for PHYS 114
⁴MATH 124 is a co-requisite for PHYS 161

NOTE: It is imperative that students begin chemistry as early in their program as possible.

The courses listed below apply to GUR and may also apply toward pre-veterinary requirements of many schools.

ACOM: ENG 101
BCOM: COMM 101, 224; ENG 202
QSR: MATH 124, 240
LSCI: BIOL 204, 205, 206
  CHEM 121, 122, 123
  PHYS 115, 116, 161, 162, 163
SCI: PHYS 114

Additional Resources:

Join the advisors’ Pre-veterinary Listserv: Send an e-mail to Renee.Murray@wwu.edu with this information: Subject: pre-veterinary listserv, Last name, First name, student number, and major and concentration (if declared).

WWU Pre-Health Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/wwuprehealth/

Pre-Veterinary Club: Join this and other WWU Associated Students clubs at http://as.wwu.edu/clubs/.

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC): www.aavmc.org. This site includes a link to the Veterinary Medical Centralized Application Service (VMCAS) and to a monthly newsletter service.

Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine http://dvm.vetmed.wsu.edu/prospective-students

Standardized Tests

- Graduate Record Exam (GRE) www.ets.org/gre
- Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat

Explore Health Careers: www.explorehealthcareers.org

DECLARING A MAJOR*: refer to the department of your chosen major for prerequisites and GPA requirements for declaring.

*NOTE: To major in Biology requires a grade point average of 2.9 or better for CHEM 121, 122, 123, and BIOL 204, 205, and 206 in order to advance to Phase II of the Biology major. Admission to Phase II is required in order to take upper division Biology classes.

To major in Biochemistry requires a 3.0 grade average in CHEM 121, 122, 123, 351, 352 and BIOL 205 in order to move on to a Phase II Biochemistry major.

To major in Chemistry (BS) requires a grade point average of 3.0 in CHEM 121, 122, 123, 351, 352 and MATH 124 and 125 in order to move on to a Phase II Chemistry major.

ACCESS TO CLASSES:

Due to high student demand for many upper-division courses, especially in the sciences, many departments must give enrollment priority to students for whom these courses are required for their major over those who want to take them for electives. Registration details for these and other heavily impacted programs are posted at department websites:

Biology: https://cse.wwu.edu/biology/registration
Chemistry: https://cse.wwu.edu/chemistry/registration

REPEATING COURSES: is not viewed favorably by professional schools. An isolated case may be acceptable but may also require an explanation in application. Discuss your options first with a Pre-Healthcare Advisor.

This document has been created for advising purposes only. Please contact Advising for Pre-Healthcare Professions for updates and changes.