



APPLICATION TIPS & STRATEGIES

GENERAL TIPS & STRATEGIES

- ✓ Complete an application via VMCAS or our website
 - Apply via VMCAS (opens in January and submissions are accepted May – September for DVM programs the following year)
 - Apply via our website (no deadlines, but ideally submitted approximately 3-4 months prior to the term you would like to begin: January, May or September)
- ✓ Start early; set weekly goals for each task/application section
- ✓ Review your transcripts
- ✓ Gather documents, identify relevant experiences – dates, contact information
- ✓ Identify letter writers (evaluators) for your recommendation letters
- ✓ In general, focus on experiences that occurred during college (although some high school experiences may be relevant)
- ✓ Take your time with your responses
- ✓ Review everything carefully before submitting; first decisions are made solely on what is in writing on your application

ACADEMIC PROFILE & EVIDENCE OF ACADEMIC READINESS

- ✓ Transcripts of all schools attended; the Admissions Committee will consider the following:
 - Overall CGPA, pre-requisite courses CGPA, advanced science CGPA, and CGPA of any post-bac or graduate courses
 - Trends through the four years, repeats (Ws, Ds, Fs); finish strong with an upward trend
 - Bachelor's degree is not required and your program of study is not a strong determining factor; GRADES ARE!
 - Tips re: grades:
 - Any F on transcript SHOULD be repeated, any F/D in pre-requisite courses HAVE to be repeated and any other science F/Ds SHOULD be repeated
 - If raising the science GPA is a goal, instead of repeating Cs, consider taking advanced science courses such as A&P, Immunology, Zoology, Medical Terminology, etc., striving for a B or better
 - Provide a personal statement to explain any academic 'miscues' or rough classes, semester or year; besides explaining 'what happened' also discuss what you learned, how you 'course-corrected,' and what strategies you implemented to improve
- ✓ GRE – general w/ verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing sections
 - Focus on quantitative and analytical writing – provides evidence of your math, problem solving, and critical thinking
 - Take full length practice tests; consider timing and test taking strategies
- ✓ Give thought to study habits and strategies:
 - Are you a pro-active learner – do you prepare ahead for lecture, review notes daily?
 - Are you organized with a good time management system – keep a structured study routine?
 - Are you an active learner – designing study guides, consider problem and application based learning, utilize drawing, charting, or outlining concepts, make up quizzes or games to assist with understanding concepts not just memorizing, utilize a study buddy or group study?
 - Do you ask for help and utilize academic resources – take advantage of tutoring, review sessions?
- ✓ Research – any topic or experience; indicates active learning, critical thinking, and a curious mind
- ✓ Academic letter of recommendation – a professor you have a good relationship with, who can speak to your academic characteristics (engaged in learning, timeliness, group work, etc.); where possible speak to your active learning methods and ability to be a critical thinker

UNDERSTANDING THE PROFESSION

A solid knowledge of the professional demands, expectations and obligations and, evidence of your professional readiness

- ✓ Experience with animals without and with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM)
 - Exposure to small and large animals beneficial
 - When describing your experience, focus on what you learned – skills/competencies gained, not so much on tasks/responsibilities
 - Minimum of 150 hours with a DVM; additional hours in husbandry beneficial (shelters, boarding, farm/ranch hand, etc.)
- ✓ Essay/personal statement responses that focus on three specific questions:
 - There are many career choices within the veterinary profession. What are your future career goals and why?
 - In what ways do veterinarians contribute to society and what do you hope to contribute?
 - Consider the breadth of society which veterinarians serve. What attributes do you believe are essential to be successful within the veterinary profession? Of these attributes, which do you possess and how have you demonstrated these in the past?
- ✓ Professional letter of recommendation – a DVM you have a good relationship with who will speak to your teamwork, curiosity about the profession, professionalism with clients and co-workers, etc.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS AS A DVM STUDENT AND FUTURE PROFESSIONAL

- ✓ Provide evidence of your positive personal characteristics and qualities through the following:
 - Participation in clubs and organizations, including leadership responsibilities
 - Work experiences (animal or non-animal related) that identifies team work, responsibility, and accountability
 - Experiences outside of your comfort zone that exposed you to different people, cultures, and activities with opportunities for personal growth
 - Long term commitment to a demanding extra-curricular activity (sports, music, arts)
 - Letters of recommendation should address your personal, educational, and professional growth and maturity
 - Personal statements; responses to essay questions
 - Interview
- ✓ Committee and application reviewers will look for the following qualities:
 - Resiliency and persistence to cope with the rigor, demands, and expectations of both the DVM education and the profession
 - Commitment and dedication to the journey ahead; a curiosity, open mindedness, and a love of learning; to take responsibility and initiative for lifelong learning
 - Excellent communication skills; an ability to communicate professionally with your peers and colleagues, be articulate – providing robust responses with detail and examples, as well as be a good listener and aware of what your body language communicates
 - Excellent interpersonal skills; friendly, personable, engaging, approachable
 - Confidence and poise – a maturity to be able to cope with new experiences

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ Dress professionally (applicable to virtual interviews as well)
- ✓ Be prepared to demonstrate good interpersonal and communication skills; consider body language, listening skills, as well as the ability to be articulate – provide robust responses with good detail and examples
- ✓ Review information about the school you are interviewing with; why does the school appeal to you, why would it be a good fit and what do you like about the program?
- ✓ Review your transcript and be prepared to discuss any poor grades and/or difficult semesters; what will you do differently to be successful in the DVM program?
- ✓ Prepare to discuss your experiences – what you gained, specific skills and competencies learned, what you enjoyed, and specifically how did they help you grow personally and professionally