



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Western College of Veterinary Medicine

USASK.CA/WCVM



APPLICANT MANUAL - U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS Fall 2022 Entry Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Program

**U.S./international applicants must apply online through VMCAS
(Veterinary Medical College Application Service)**

Application deadline extended to September 29, 2021



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This document outlines the admissions requirements and policies as recommended by the WCVM Admissions Committee and approved by the WCVM Faculty Council, under the purview of the WCVM Interprovincial Agreement and regarded as the definitive statement of admissions policies for the current international admissions cycle (2022 entry). Individuals considering applying for entry into the DVM Program in subsequent years must not assume the same policies and practices will be in effect for future application cycles.

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I. ELIGIBILITY FOR U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL APPLICANT POOL

As a regional veterinary college, the WCVM accepts 58 applicants from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the northern territories for a pre-determined number of provincially-subsidized seats, and admits up to 30 additional applicants through seats which are not provincially subsidized. **A minimum of 5 seats will be offered to non-Canadian applicants for Fall 2022 entry.**

Citizens or permanent residents of **any country other than Canada** can apply to the US/International pool. Canadians with dual citizenship are eligible to apply to the international applicant pool but, if accepted, will be required to pay international student tuition and fees for the duration of their program.

Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada who do not meet the western Canadian residency requirements and are not dual citizens are not eligible to apply to the WCVM. Please contact the Canadian veterinary college that serves your region.

II. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A. University Requirements

The pre-veterinary course requirements consist of 60 credit units (20, one-term courses) from an accredited university. One credit represents one lecture hour equivalent per week for one term (or approximately one semester hour of credits). Prerequisite courses must be completed by April 30 of the year for which admission is sought.

- 6 credits of Biology (lab required)
- 6 credits of Chemistry (lab required)
- 6 credits of English (at least one course must include literature component)
- 6 credits of Mathematics or Statistics
- 3 credits of Organic Chemistry
- 3 credits of Physics (lab required)
- 3 credits of Biochemistry
- 3 credits of Genetics
- 3 credits of Introductory Microbiology
- 21 credits of elective courses

= 60 TOTAL CREDITS

In addition to completing the required pre-veterinary courses, applicants should be working toward an undergraduate degree, since the majority of students have completed three to four years of university before gaining admission to the DVM program.

Minimum, overall GPA of 3.2 is required to be eligible to apply; this average must be maintained for any coursework completed during the year of application.

- **Electives:** There are no "preferred" electives: the choice of electives should be based upon the requirements of the program in which the student is enrolled or the student's general interests.
- **Pre-veterinary courses must** be taken at an accredited post-secondary institution (as recognized by the U of S).

- **Applicants from outside of North America** will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine acceptability of both the institution and the individual courses. A foreign credential evaluation from World Education Services (WES) is required with your VMCAS application.
- **Courses taken as part of vocational programs**, such as animal health or veterinary technology programs, are not usually accepted to meet the college's pre-veterinary course requirements. However, a few courses in some programs may be used if the applicant has completed the program. Each case is considered on its individual merit.
- **Course Guidelines:** Courses included in the overall and best full year average calculations must be appropriate or aligned with an applicant's year of university and program. For example, upper-year students should be taking predominantly third- and fourth-year courses as opposed to introductory-level courses. The WCVM Admissions Committee may determine that specific courses be excluded from both of these averages (overall and best full year), if they aren't deemed to be appropriate. The exclusion of "inappropriate" courses in a given year may result in that year no longer being considered "full" (24 credits), potentially disqualifying it from being used as the best full year in the academic score calculation.

Note: The Admissions Office will contact applicants whose course selections are flagged for concern, and they will give them the opportunity to provide comments/explanation.

- **NEW Full Course Requirement** - Effective Fall 2022 entry

All applicants must have completed at least two full years of university courses at the time of application. The definition of a "full year" for this purpose is a minimum of 24 credits (≥8 one-term courses, excluding labs) completed within the regular September to April academic year.

Applicants who are studying at universities with an irregular academic year (other than September to April), enrolled in co-op programs, or unsure of whether they meet the two full-year requirement should contact the WCVM Admissions Office to confirm their eligibility to apply.

Note: See "Academic Score" below for further information on a "[true full-course load](#)"

B. COVID-19 Pandemic – Pass/Fail Grades issued in Winter (Jan-Apr) 2020 term

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting the Winter (Jan-Apr) 2020 term, pass/fail grades obtained in this term will be accepted. However, in order to ensure fairness within the WCVM applicant pool, a combination of both numeric/letter and pass grades will not be permitted. For example, applicants who chose to change one or more course grade(s) to a "pass" grade in the Winter 2020 term will have all courses for the term considered as "pass". As a result, the winter 2020 term will not impact an applicant's overall average (even if grades are displayed for remaining courses). **Note:** If applicants attended institutions where the pass-fail grade option extended into spring, summer or fall 2020 terms, the same guidelines will be applied.

The September 2019-April 2020 academic year may be considered an applicant's best full year, if it meets the full year definition outlined in Section II. C ([below](#)) and works out to be an applicant's highest full year.

Additional information may be submitted under the following circumstances:

- Applicants who were not given a choice in receiving pass/fail grades for a particular course/courses (for example, decision made by professor or institution) will be permitted to use numeric/letter grades from their other courses, if applicable. However, it is the applicant's responsibility to inform the WCVM Admissions Office of these courses at the time of application, as verification will be required from the professor/institution.
- Applicants who completed courses which were classified as pass/fail prior to the Winter 2020 term (ie, not changed to pass/fail as a result of COVID-19 grading provisions) must inform the WCVM Admissions Office at the time of application, to ensure the term is recognized appropriately.
- Applicants who received a "fail" or grade below 50 per cent in the Winter 2020 term may provide the WCVM Admissions Office with a written explanation of circumstances at the time of application. The WCVM Admissions Office will consider these circumstances on an individual basis to determine whether the failed grade will be included in the calculation of averages.

C. Academic Score

The academic score, as outlined below, is the basis for interview offers:

- 2/3 overall average (all university courses completed) - minimum 3.2 GPA required
- 1/3 best full year average *

*The definition of a full year for this purpose is a minimum of 24 credits (≥ 8 one-term courses, excluding labs) completed within the regular Sept-Apr academic year. However, a "true full-course load" is considered 30 credits (10 one-term courses completed in the Sept-Apr academic year). Taking a true full-course load is strongly recommended to ensure an applicant's preparedness and future success in the DVM program where each academic year is comprised of 42-45 credits.

Note: The maximum number of **pass/fail graded courses** permitted within an applicant's best full year of university is 2 one-term courses (6 credits), with the exception of the Winter 2020 term impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic (see [Section B](#) above).

The Admissions Committee will consider removing one or two earlier years of university grades from an applicant's overall average calculation at the point of completing 5 or 6 full years of university, respectively. The number of credits required to be considered a 5-year student is 150 credits (50 one-term courses), and 180 credits (60 one-term courses) to be considered a 6-year student. Removal of an earlier year (or two) is not automatic, as the Committee requires specific criteria to be met – generally speaking, this includes completing three higher, more current years of university with sustained improved academic performance. More current/higher years should be full (30 credits within the Sept-Apr year) and consist predominantly of upper-level courses. Applicants hoping to have earlier year(s) removed should contact the Admissions Office for approval of courses prior to enrollment.

D. English Language Proficiency

The language of instruction and examination at the University of Saskatchewan is English. An advanced level of English proficiency is essential for successful completion of the DVM Program and for safe client care in the veterinary profession. **Applicants who have not completed a minimum of two years of full-time study in a degree program from an accredited post-secondary institution (as recognized by the U of S) where English is the official language of instruction and examination** must present evidence of meeting the minimum scores in one of the English Proficiency Examinations listed below.

| IELTS | TOEFL - iBT* | CanTest | CAEL | ESL |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Overall: 7.0 Reading: 6.5 Listening: 6.5 Speaking: 7.0 Writing: 7.0 | Overall: 94 Reading: 22 Listening: 22 Speaking: 25 Writing: 25 | Overall: n/a Reading: 4.5 Listening: 4.5 Speaking: 5.0 Writing: 5.0 | Overall: 70 Reading: 60 Listening: 60 Speaking: 70 Writing: 70 | Overall: 80% Speaking: 80% Writing: 80% |

*The University of Saskatchewan's institution code for the TOEFL test is 0980.

Please note:

- Test scores must be available at the time of application.
- All scores must be from one exam date.
- Tests are valid for 24 months after the testing date and must be valid at the beginning of the student's first term of registration in the DVM Program.
- If a student defers admission to a future term, the test score must be valid at the time of the new start date; otherwise, the student must take a new test and achieve the minimum scores.

III. NON-ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are required to have both experience and good knowledge of animals and the veterinary profession to be successful in gaining admission. The diversity, quality, depth, and breadth of animal and veterinary experiences are assessed in the interview.

A. Animal and Veterinary Experience

The importance of animal and veterinary experience is to ensure applicants “know what they are getting into” and are making an informed career choice.

Veterinary experience - Experiences should be obtained under the supervision of a veterinarian in placements such as clinical practice, research laboratories, animal shelters, animal rehabilitation facilities, public health settings or another related industry where a veterinarian is employed. Veterinary experience provides applicants insight into the day-to-day life as a veterinarian and an understanding of the veterinary profession. For many, obtaining veterinary experience means spending quality time with a veterinarian — either as a volunteer or as a paid employee.

Animal experience - Significant animal experience is required because it is assumed that most veterinarians will be working with animals during their career. Experience working with animals allows applicants to determine how well they enjoy working with animals. These experiences also help to give an indication of their aptitude and compassion. "Significant animal experience" goes beyond pet ownership. For example, it could include responsibility for the care and husbandry of livestock or a food animal unit, breeding/showing animals, experience at rehabilitation facilities or humane societies/shelters, working in a pet store, participating in equestrian activities, or any other animal-related hobby or experience where a veterinarian is not always present.

Types of animal and veterinary experience

Applicants' experiences are often consistent with their career goals. However, it's important to understand the diversity of the veterinary profession since both the DVM curriculum and the veterinary licensing examination require proficiency in a broad range of areas for successful completion. For this reason, it is strongly advised that applicants gain good quality experience working with a variety of species such as cows, horses, pigs, chickens, fish, exotics, wildlife, research animals, dogs and cats.

The WCVM admissions committee recognizes that applicants' career goals in the veterinary profession may change over the course of their education. During the admissions process, there are no "preferred" career choices. Applicants with an interest in one type of practice are not given preferential treatment over those with interests in other areas.

Recommended amount of experience

The amount of animal and veterinary experience will vary from one applicant to another because some individuals are more perceptive than others and some experiences might be more useful than others.

Some applicants will be able to obtain these insights after minimal exposure while other applicants may need more time and exposure.

B. Interviews

The structured interview is designed to assess the applicant's understanding of the profession and to evaluate non-academic qualities. Referees' evaluations and overall documentation are also used to assess these non-academic qualities.

Applicants who apply for entry to the DVM program will be permitted to have a maximum of three interviews. After an applicant has had three interviews, no further applications will be considered.

C. References

Applicants must submit their reference letters through the VMCAS application system. As required by the WCVM, at least one referee must be a veterinarian, while another must be an individual with an animal-related or agricultural background.

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA

Admission to the WCVM is highly competitive. Completion of the pre-veterinary requirements with the minimum admission average does not guarantee acceptance to the WCVM's DVM program.

Selection is based upon assessment of a number of factors including:

- mental aptitude
- academic performance
- motivation
- maturity
- experience with animals
- leadership qualities
- social awareness
- communication skills
- an understanding and knowledge of the veterinary profession

Degrees or diplomas held are not factors in the selection process.

The weighting of selection factors is 60 per cent academic and 40 per cent non-academic. This weighting is used to establish the rank order of applicants who will be offered admission.

The Admissions Committee may refuse admission based on any area(s) of concern identified by the Admissions Office or members of the Admissions Committee deemed inconsistent with the goals and standards of a veterinary student at the WCVM. Possible reasons for the Admissions Committee refusing an application include academic/non-academic misconduct, misrepresentation on the application, prior criminal record, input from referees/interviewers, and/or unprofessional comments/behaviour prior to or during the application process.

If one or more areas of concern is identified, the Admissions Committee retains the right to actively seek further relevant information about you, including, but not limited to, contacting individuals with knowledge of you, whom you may or may not have listed as referees. This will be done through the Admissions Office.

By submitting an application, applicants are consenting to the collection of any such supplemental information.

V. APPLYING

The deadline to apply online through [VMCAS](#) for the Western College of Veterinary Medicine's Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program is **September 29, 2021**.

A. Supplemental Application Fee

The WCVM requires a \$100 CAD supplemental application fee. The WCVM Admissions Office will contact applicants to arrange payment.

B. Submitting Transcripts

Applicants enrolled in university courses at the time of application will be required to submit additional transcripts to the WCVM.

C. Essential Skills and Abilities

Before submitting your VMCAS application, please review the essential skills and abilities required for the study of veterinary medicine.

The Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan is responsible to society to provide a program of study that produces graduates with the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes necessary to practice veterinary medicine.

- Graduates are expected to diagnose and manage health conditions in a wide variety of animal species.
- Graduates must provide compassionate care to animals and be able to communicate clearly with owners, regulatory agencies, and others.
- Graduates must also meet licensing requirements and pass licensing examinations.

While a disability should not preclude a student from consideration for admission, disabilities must not prevent the student from:

- communicating with owners of animals and colleagues
- observing patients
- collecting and analyzing clinical data

- performing medical and surgical treatments
- maintaining animal and human safety
- demonstrating appropriate judgment during the veterinary training process

Essential Skills and Abilities Required for the Study of Veterinary Medicine

Candidates for the DVM degree must demonstrate a number of essential skills and abilities.

1. Observation: The student must be able to participate in learning situations that require observational skills. In particular, students must be able to observe animals and acquire visual, auditory and tactile information from their examinations.

2. Communication: Students must be able to acquire an adequate history from an owner. Students must be able to hear and observe their animal patients in order to effectively collect information and describe the findings.

3. Motor skills: The student must demonstrate sufficient motor function to be able to perform a physical examination on an animal that may include palpation, auscultation, percussion, and diagnostic procedures including examination with an ophthalmoscope, otoscope, or stethoscope on large and small animals. Students must be reasonably able to execute motor movements to achieve general proficiency with surgical therapy and other related therapies.

4. Intellectual conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities: The student must demonstrate the cognitive skills and memory necessary to measure, calculate, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information. In addition, the student must be able to comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships. There are diagnostic, problem-solving activities commonly encountered during the DVM program that will need to be executed in a timely fashion.

5. Non-technical attributes: Veterinary students must consistently demonstrate non-technical skills, knowledge and aptitudes that allow them to interact with clients, collect histories, apply sound judgment, and complete responsibilities in the diagnosis and treatment of animals. Students must be able to develop effective relationships with owners, staff, and colleagues.

This policy exists to ensure students entering the DVM program are aware of the requirements necessary for the study of veterinary medicine, and that they have a reasonable opportunity to complete the program and earn a DVM degree.

The Western College of Veterinary Medicine is committed to facilitating the integration of students with disabilities into this college community. Each student with a disability is entitled to reasonable accommodation that will assist him or her to meet the requirements for graduation from the college.

Reasonable accommodation will be made to facilitate each student's progress. Such accommodation, however, cannot compromise animal well-being or the safety of the people involved. Therefore, it may not be possible to accommodate all disabilities and allow for successful completion of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree program.

Contact the U of S' [**Access & Equity Services Office**](#) for additional information regarding support.

VI. APPEALS PROCESS

Applicants who have not been successful in gaining admission may appeal the decision to the Dean, Western College of Veterinary Medicine, within 10 business days from the date a negative application decision is released.

Grounds for an admission appeal shall be limited to (1) unit procedural errors, (2) evidence that the information used in the assessment of the decision was wrong or incomplete, or (3) evidence that the assessment was not made according to the published admission qualifications and selection criteria.

A failure by the applicant to provide accurate and complete information in accordance with the established admission qualifications and selection criteria shall not be grounds for an appeal. The decision of the appeals committee is final, and no further appeal procedure will be entertained.

VII. DEFERRALS

Deferrals may be considered for academic and/or non-academic reasons and will normally only be for one year. It is at the sole discretion of the Associate Dean, Academic to grant or deny a deferral request.

Applicants who are offered admission to the DVM program and who wish to apply for a deferral must submit a written request to the Associate Dean, Academic within 10 days of their offer of admission being made. The request should clearly explain the reasons for the deferral request.

VIII. FURTHER INFORMATION

A. Tuition and Fees

| | \$CAD | *Approximate \$USD |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Tuition | \$67,717 | \$55,100 |
| Fees | \$988 | \$803 |
| Total | \$68,705 | \$55,903 |

* Converted from Canadian to American dollars using an exchange rate of 1.23.

Tuition estimates reflect a typical amount you could expect to pay per year (2021-22 Canadian dollar rates).

Fees are used to fund specific student benefits, including health, vision and dental coverage, a bus pass, recreational programs, and fitness centre access.

B. Estimated Additional Fees and Expenses

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| WCVSA Fees | \$25 | \$25 | \$25 | \$25 |
| Board exams (NAVLE) | n/a | n/a | n/a | \$1,000 |
| TLD dosimeters | n/a | n/a | n/a | \$30 |
| Laptop computer | \$1,000 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Textbooks | \$1,500 | \$2,000 | \$1,500 | \$1,000 |
| Printing and paper | \$300 | \$300 | \$300 | \$300 |
| Instruments and special clothing | \$300 | \$300 | \$300 | \$300 |
| Rabies immunizations | \$150 | n/a | \$230 | n/a |
| Travel expenses (optional) | \$1,800 | \$1,800 | \$1,800 | \$3,000 |
| Canadian \$ | \$5,075 | \$4,425 | \$4,155 | \$5,655 |
| *Approximate American \$ | \$4,128 | \$3,600 | \$3,380 | \$4,600 |

* Converted from Canadian to American dollars using an exchange rate of 1.23.

Prices subject to change and will vary from student to student.

C. Special Expenditures

- Each student who is registered for the first year of veterinary medicine must purchase a laptop computer.
- The purchase of a microscope is not necessary. The WCVM has recently incorporated virtual microscopy into its DVM program. Laptop computers will be used instead of microscopes.
- Instruments will be required for anatomy dissection and clinical work. Departments that are involved in instructing these courses will advise students on preferred types or models.

D. Study Permits/Visas for U.S. and International Students

Non-Canadian students who are accepted into the DVM program at the WCVM will need to apply for a study permit upon receipt of their Letter of Offer. A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) may also be required depending on citizenship. (TRVs are not required for citizens of visa-exempt countries, such as the United States.) For more information, please visit the [International Student and Study Abroad Centre website](#).

E. WCVM Rabies Immunization Policy

The WCVM Rabies Immunization Policy is designed to ensure that all WCVM faculty, students and staff who work with animals and animal tissues are protected from infection with the rabies virus. Rabies vaccination

is required for all students enrolled in the DVM program. Vaccination and titer clinics will be organized by the WCVM for students in the first year of their program.

F. Miscellaneous

Please visit the WCVM Admissions [website](#) for the following information:

- About the WCVM/Why Study Here
- Curriculum/Course and Program Catalogue
- Career Options
- Accreditation
- Entry Statistics
- Disclosure & Privacy Statement