DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE (DVM) PROGRAM

APPLICANT MANUAL

Application Deadline: December 1 yearly
(for following fall entry)

Admissions Office, Western College of Veterinary Medicine
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I. RESIDENCY

WCVM: Regional Nature

As a regional veterinary college, the WCVM accepts applicants who are residents of the four western provinces and the northern territories. The number of applicants admitted from each western province is determined by an allotment system:

- British Columbia: 20
- Alberta: 20
- Saskatchewan: 20
- Manitoba: 15
- Northern territories (Yukon, Nunavut and Northwest Territories): 1
- Education Equity Program: 2

An interprovincial agreement between the four western provinces and the WCVM outlines definite rules to determine an applicant's province of residence:

- In the case of an applicant who has not established his or her own residence and lived in that residence for 12 continuous months (excluding any time enrolled as a post-secondary student in or outside of that province), the WCVM will consider the applicant’s residence to be the province or territory of Canada where his or her parent(s) have lived most recently for 12 continuous months before the WCVM’s December 1 application deadline.

- In the case of an applicant who has established his or her own residence in a province or territory in Canada, the WCVM will consider the individual’s residence to be the Canadian province or territory where the applicant lived most recently for 12 continuous months before the WCVM’s December 1 application deadline. This 12-month period excludes any time enrolled as a post-secondary student in or outside of that province.

- In the case of an applicant who has established his or her own residence outside Canada and intends to re-establish residence in this country, the WCVM will consider the applicant’s residence to be the Canadian province or territory where he or she lived most recently for 12 continuous months before leaving Canada. This 12-month period excludes any time enrolled as a post-secondary student in or outside of that province.

- In the case of an applicant who is a Permanent Resident of Canada (as defined in Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Protection Act), the WCVM will consider the applicant’s residence to be the province or territory where he or she first resided in Canada under two conditions: the applicant has established his or her own residence in a Canadian province or territory but has not yet accumulated 12 continuous months without post-secondary study, and the applicant’s parent(s) do not reside in Canada.

Because the Yukon, Nunavut and Northwest Territories are not formal signatories of the interprovincial funding contract, they apply their own rules for applicants claiming to be residents of these areas.
All applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada. Residents of foreign countries are not eligible to be considered for admission to the WCVM.

II. ABORIGINAL EQUITY ACCESS PROGRAM

Each year, two seats are available for Aboriginal students through the Education Equity Program. Applicants must be residents of the four western Canadian provinces or the northern territories. The WCVM requires proof of Aboriginal ancestry that must be provided at the time of application.

Requirements for access to equity program - a certified copy of one of the following cards:

- Indian Status or Treaty Card
- Métis Membership Card
- Nunavut Trust Service Card
- Inuit roll number

III. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

High school requirements: There are no specific high school requirements for the DVM program. However, the following high school courses are often required for university-level pre-veterinary courses:

- Grade 12 level mathematics
- Grade 12 level biology
- Grade 12 level chemistry
- Grade 12 level physics

Students planning to take pre-veterinary courses should consult with the institution they plan to attend for further information about high school prerequisites for pre-veterinary courses.

University requirements: The pre-veterinary course requirements are usually met in a College of Arts and Sciences or a College of Agriculture. The pre-veterinary coursework may be taken at any accredited college or university. Non-residents of Saskatchewan will not improve their chances of admission by attending the University of Saskatchewan for pre-veterinary coursework.

The pre-veterinary course requirements consist of 60 credits of required and elective courses. One credit represents one lecture hour equivalent per week for one term (or approximately one semester hour of credit):

- 6 credits of Biology
- 6 credits of Chemistry
- 6 credits of English
- 6 credits of Mathematics or Statistics
- 3 credits of Organic Chemistry
- 3 credits of Physics
- 3 credits of Biochemistry
- 3 credits of Genetics
- 3 credits of Introductory Microbiology
- 21 credits of elective courses
• TOTAL: 60 CREDITS

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. Students are encouraged to select electives that will liberalize or broaden their perspective.

**Pre-veterinary requirements:** At least two full years of university courses are required to complete the requirements. Most applicants have more than two years of university. However, neither the number of years of pre-professional study nor the degree(s) held are factors in selecting students.

Courses taken as part of vocational programs — such as animal health technician 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 vocational program. Each case is considered on its individual merit.

**Minimum Requirements for Admission**

WCVM faculty members have approved a policy that requires all applicants to have a minimum, cumulative average of 75 per cent to be considered for admission into the veterinary program. All grades are converted to a common scale for comparative purposes and this converted average will be used.

**IV. NON-ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

**Animal and Veterinary Experience**

Although animal and veterinary experience are not specific requirements, an applicant will be stronger if he/she can demonstrate good knowledge of the veterinary profession accompanied by first-hand experience. Applicants without significant animal and veterinary experience are rarely successful in being admitted.

Q. Why is experience with animals important?

Significant animal experience is important because it's assumed that most veterinarians will be working with animals during a significant part of their time. Experiences working with animals not only give applicants some idea as to how well they might enjoy working with animals, but it also gives some indication of their aptitude and compassion.

Q. What do you mean by "significant animal experience"?

"Significant animal experience" goes beyond having a pet. For example, it could include responsibility for the care and husbandry of a food-animal unit or an experimental animal colony.

Q. Why do you encourage experience in veterinary medicine?

The basis for emphasizing veterinary activity has a rationale similar to that for animal experience: the applicant learns about the day-to-day life as a veterinarian. The purpose of the experience is not to learn a basic core of veterinary or animal handling skills. For many, obtaining veterinary experience means spending quality time with a veterinarian, either as an observer or as an employee.

Q. Should I gain experience in one particular area of veterinary medicine?
There is no advantage in having veterinary experience in one given veterinary activity over that of another. For example, experience with a food animal practitioner is not necessarily better than experience in a small animal practice. The main thing is that the applicant's experiences be consistent with their career goals at the time of admission.

Of course, the WCVM admissions committee recognizes that applicants' career goals within the 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.

**Q. How much animal and veterinary experience should I have?**

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. For example, a student might gain more experience as an employee at a veterinary clinic versus being an observer at a veterinary practice.

Gaining a range of insights is the prime reason for emphasizing experience. Some applicants will be able to obtain these insights after minimal exposure, while other applicants may need more time and exposure.

**Q. Is it better to try and gain a variety of experiences?**

A variety of experiences is also an asset, so long as experience in different areas is not so superficial as to be meaningless. Breadth of veterinary experience gives an applicant a better overall view of what the profession has to offer.

From an admissions point of view, the major benefit of animal and veterinary experience is to help ensure that applicants "know what they are getting into." However, the WCVM admissions committee may also consider an applicant's efforts to gain experience as an indication of his or her motivation to become a veterinarian.

**V. ADMISSION PROCESS**

Each year, the Western College of Veterinary Medicine admits up to 78 students to its first year class. Since there are usually about 400 applications every year, completion of the pre-veterinary requirements does not guarantee admission to the College.

**Selection Criteria**

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

- mental aptitude
- academic performance
- motivation
- maturity
- experience with animals
- leadership qualities
- social awareness
- deportment, verbal facility and ability to communicate
an understanding and knowledge of the veterinary profession.

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

**Transcripts and Academic Performance**

Mental aptitude and academic performance are mainly evaluated by academic transcripts.

All university work undertaken is considered when evaluating academic performance. The course load of the applicant is a consideration. Applicants who have not taken a full course load (i.e. 30 credits for an academic session) could be at a disadvantage when evaluating academic performance.

A common misconception regarding academic performance is that only applicants with "straight A's" have a chance to be admitted to the WCVM. This is untrue even for those provinces for which competition is most keen. The average will vary from province to province because of the differences among the provincial applicant pools.

**Interviews**

Applicants are selected for interviews on the basis of an academic score:

- 2/3 overall average (all university courses completed)
- 1/3 best full year average (full year defined as 24 credits or more taken within the regular September-April academic term)

The structured interview is designed to assess the applicant's ability to cope with the veterinary program and to evaluate non-academic qualities. Referees' evaluations and overall documentation are also used to assess these non-academic qualities. Applicants attending out-of-province interviews will be charged a $150 fee.

**References**

Applicants are required to nominate two referees to support their WCVM application. One referee must be a veterinarian while the other must be an individual who has an animal-related or agricultural background. Space is provided on the application form to list referees' name and email address.

Referees will be contacted directly and asked to complete the reference form online. A sample of the reference form can be found online.

**VI. APPLY ONLINE**

**Application Procedures**

The deadline to apply online for the Western College of Veterinary Medicine's Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program is **December 1**.

- Apply online at the WCVM: [https://wcvm1.usask.ca/prd/sAdmissions/WCVMAdmissions.html](https://wcvm1.usask.ca/prd/sAdmissions/WCVMAdmissions.html)

Before submitting your application, please review the essential skills and abilities required for the study of veterinary medicine.
In addition to submitting a completed application form, applicants must arrange for the following:

- **Official transcripts of university records**: All applicants must have official transcripts sent directly from institutions attended to the WCVM Admissions Office:

  Admissions Office — Room 3101  
  Western College of Veterinary Medicine, U of S  
  52 Campus Drive  
  Saskatoon SK  S7N 5B4

  Official transcripts should be sent at the time of application unless applicants are currently enrolled in university courses. In such cases, current year transcripts are required immediately upon grades being reporting in both January and May for the September-December and January-April terms, respectively.

  University of Saskatchewan transcripts will be accessed directly (not required from registrar).

When the application and supporting documents have been received and evaluated, the WCVM Admissions Office will contact applicants who will be interviewed to inform them of the time and place of the interview.

**Note**: Two applicants are interviewed for each first-year seat (for example, 40 applicants will be interviewed for the 20 allotted B.C. seats).

The weighting of selection factors to determine the rank order of acceptance is 60 per cent academic and 40 per cent non-academic.

Final selections for admission are made after interviewing is completed. The process is usually completed **before July 1**.

### VII. FINANCES

**Tuition and Fees**

**Pre-veterinary students at the U of S**

- Please visit [U of S Tuition and Fees](#) for more information about tuition, fees, payment of fees, cancellations and refunds, and course changes.

**Veterinary students at the WCVM**

- Please visit the [WCVM Tuition and Fees page](#) for a detailed breakdown of tuition, fees and estimated expenses associated with the DVM program.

**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.
Financial Assistance
The WCVM does not administer financial assistance programs. For information about financial assistance while attending WCVM, prospective students should contact the student financial aids branches of their respective provincial Departments of Education.

- Government of British Columbia: Visit Student Aid B.C.
  [http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/)
- Government of Alberta: Visit Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS)
  [http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/fo/funding-post-sec.html](http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/fo/funding-post-sec.html)
- Government of Saskatchewan: Visit Student Loans
- Government of Manitoba: Visit Manitoba Student Aid

College awards are available for qualified students who are enrolled at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

- Visit Scholarships and Bursaries for more information.
- Visit Money Matters on the University of Saskatchewan site.
  [http://explore.usask.ca/moneymatters/](http://explore.usask.ca/moneymatters/)

Student Budget
Students/applicants looking for assistance with budgeting throughout their pre-veterinary/veterinary education are encouraged to use the University of Saskatchewan's online budgeting tool.

VIII. FURTHER INFORMATION – relating to the following can be found on the WCVM Admissions website

Pre-vet Contacts
- Advisors – at the WCVM and a listing of advisors at universities/colleges across western Canada
- Pre-Vet Clubs – links to clubs at western Canadian universities
- Volunteering Opportunities – at the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre

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