The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine admitted its first students to the professional curriculum during the 1973-74 academic year. The original entering class consisted of 36 students, all residents of Louisiana. Class size has increased significantly in recent years. The school participates in the Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) program for education in veterinary medicine. Training contracts negotiated through SREB provide a limited number of entering spaces for qualified candidates from Arkansas. A limited number of entering spaces is also allocated for highly qualified nonresident applicants under the school’s special admission policy.

The AVMA Council on Education (COE) is the national accrediting agency for veterinary medical education in the United States. The AVMA COE assures that minimum standards in veterinary medical education are met by all AVMA-accredited colleges or schools of veterinary medicine, and that students enrolled in those colleges or schools receive an education that will prepare them for entry-level positions in the profession. The LSU program has met all essential requirements for an acceptable college or school as established by the AVMA COE. Full accreditation was granted in 1977 and reaffirmed in 1984, 1991, 1998, 2005, and 2010. The next evaluation by the AVMA COE will take place in 2012.

The School of Veterinary Medicine offers the professional degree, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. Interdepartmental Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degree programs in veterinary medical sciences are offered through the Graduate School.

THE PROFESSIONAL DVM PROGRAM IN VETERINARY MEDICINE

Admission Requirements

Students contemplating a career in veterinary medicine should acquire a sound foundation in the biological and physical sciences and a general knowledge of the arts and humanities in both high school and college. In addition, they should be motivated by a liking for animals, a sincere desire to serve the public, a propensity for the biological and medical sciences, and a deep interest in promotion of the health of animal and human populations. They must have a high aptitude for scientific study and must possess an excellent moral and ethical character.

Candidates for the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree must complete a minimum of six years of college education. This includes two or more years of preveterinary training and four years of professional training. The preveterinary requirements may be completed at LSU or any other accredited college or university offering courses of the quality and content of those prescribed in the LSU General Catalog. (See the section of this catalog titled “College of Agriculture” for the preveterinary medicine curriculum at LSU.)

The minimum requirement of 66 semester hours, including 20 hours of elective courses, may be completed in two years. Successful completion of a preveterinary program does not guarantee admission to the school for professional training. Currently, there are more qualified applicants each year than there are spaces available in the entering class. Instruction in the four-year program is available only through the School of Veterinary Medicine at LSU.

Scholastic achievement is measured by performance in the prescribed preprofessional courses. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 (“A” = 4.00) in these courses is required for consideration for admission. A grade of less than “C” in a required course is unacceptable. Physical education activity courses may not be used as electives for meeting pre-professional requirements. Requirements are not waived in lieu of work experience.

Credit earned through advanced standing is acceptable, but is not used in the computation of the grade point average. Evaluation of the applicant’s record in the pre-professional program is made in accordance with LSU procedures. Credit is not granted for College Level Examination Program (CLEP) general examinations. Granting of credit for CLEP subject examinations may be considered in those subjects recommended by various departments of the University upon receipt of test scores indicating the student meets the minimum acceptable scores required by those departments.

Admission Procedures

The following information pertains only to the professional DVM program. Students interested in the MS and/or PhD programs should contact the LSU Graduate School for more information.

Admission to the School of Veterinary Medicine is granted only for the fall semester of each school year and only on a full-time basis. A prescribed number of student spaces is planned for each class and formal application material with all supporting credentials is required of each applicant. Students admitted and enrolled in the school must be capable of satisfactorily meeting all requirements of the curriculum in veterinary medicine. Eligible candidates are chosen to be interviewed by members of the Faculty Committee on Admissions and Scholastic Standing and are carefully selected to ensure that they are properly motivated, competent to undertake the rigorous courses of professional study, and capable of meeting the demands of a professional career.
The Faculty Committee on Admissions and Scholastic Standing is responsible for determining the application procedure and for selecting the entering class in the professional program. All professional requirements must be completed by the end of the spring semester before fall matriculation in the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. Formal applications must be submitted no later than early October. (Please check the LSU SVM Admission Web site at www.vetmed.lsu.edu/admissions for the specific deadline dates.) Applications must be submitted through the Veterinary Medical Colleges Application Service (VMCAS). Along with the VMCAS application materials, a supplemental application must be completed and submitted directly to the School of Veterinary Medicine’s Admissions Office, as well as all official undergraduate/graduate transcripts, GRE scores, and letters of recommendation. Please visit the LSU SVM’s VMCAS’s Web site at www.vetmed.lsu.edu/admissions for more details on the application process. Students reapplying must submit a completely new application for each application period, including VMCAS application, all official transcripts, GRE scores, supplemental applications, etc.

Academic and non-academic qualifications are considered in the selection process. GPA calculation is based on the sum of the objective and subjective scores. The exact combination of each component to the total score may vary slightly from year to year and is determined by the admissions committee and the dean.

- An objective score that comprises approximately 65 percent of the final calculation is determined by the GPA in all required courses (approximately 29 percent), the GPA in the last 45-60 hours (approximately 18 percent), and the score on the GRE (approximately 18 percent).
- A subjective score comprises approximately 35 percent of the final calculation determined by a review of the applicant’s file (approximately 15 percent), an interview (for Louisiana and Arkansas residents only – approximately 10 percent), and a holistic assessment by the admissions committee.

The objective evaluation is based on scholastic achievement and standardized test scores. Official transcripts of college course grades are examined to determine scholastic achievement. The total objective score is derived from the grade point average on required courses, the grade point average on the most recent 45-60 semester hours of course work, and the results of the GRE. New knowledge, especially in the sciences, is accruing at a rapid rate, so if a student has completed the pre-professional requirements several years prior to application, records will be carefully scrutinized. It is advised that all required science courses should be completed within six calendar years immediately prior to application. Within the last six years, organic chemistry, at least one biology (preferably microbiology), and one general physics course must be completed.

In addition to the specific prerequisite courses, also factored into the Required Course GPA are any other animal science, physical science or biological science courses that within an “A” grade is earned. Social science, humanities, business, engineering, kinesiology, and any general education courses are NOT calculated into the required course GPA; however, these courses (with the exception of kinesiology courses) will still be used for the last 45 credit hour as shown below.

The objective evaluation of applicants is based on non-academic qualifications considered relevant to the determination of the applicant’s prospective performance in the veterinary medical curriculum and in the practice of veterinary medicine. Motivation, maturity, attitude, interest, and other characteristics will be evaluated for all qualified candidates, along with work experience, familiarity with animals, and reference information submitted in support of the application. These qualities are evaluated by a Faculty Committee. The first committee reviews the supporting documents (autobiography, letters of recommendation, transcripts, work experience, and familiarity with animals). The second committee evaluates the individual through a personal interview. These appraisals result in an average objective score which is added to the objective score to produce the total numerical evaluation of the candidate. Through this process, the professional judgment of several faculty members is included in arriving at a final decision of recommended students for the new class. Interviews are not granted to every Louisiana and Arkansas applicant, and only select out-of-state applicants will be invited to interview.

The final decision rests with the dean of the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. The Faculty Committee on Admissions and Scholastic Standing makes their recommendations to the dean who then finalizes the offers of admission.

Under exceptional circumstances, a limited number of students not selected under the above criteria may be admitted. Factors to be considered by the Faculty Committee on Admissions & Scholastic Standing include undergraduate experience, GRE score, advanced academic work, work experience, or participation in special educational programs, as well as special attributes possessed by the applicant that add to the cultural, educational, and/or geographical diversity of the entering class.

Please visit the School of Veterinary Medicine’s Admissions Office Web site at www.vetmed.lsu.edu/admissions for more information on admission requirements, residency, classifications, minimum prerequisites, admissions procedures, statistics, important dates and deadlines, and much more.

Minimum Prerequisites for Admission (66 sem. hrs.)

- Pre-veterinary students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with admission requirements for the professional program at the School of Veterinary Medicine. Students should seek knowledgeable pre-veterinary counselors and/or advice from the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine’s Admission Office (admissions@vetmed.lsu.edu) when enrolled in pre-professional programs other than at LSU. A minimum of 66 total semester hours is required for consideration for admission into the professional DVM program. This must include the 46 semester credit hours of the courses listed below. More specific details regarding course descriptions can be at the School of Veterinary Medicine Admissions Web site at www.vetmed.lsu.edu/admissions.

- Biological Science, 12 sem. hrs. • Must include at least eight sem. hrs. (two-semester course sequence with laboratory) in introductory zoology or general biology at a level appropriate for premedical students. Must also include at least four sem. hrs. (one-semester course with laboratory) in microbiology at a level appropriate for premedical students, LSU courses—BIOL 1201, 1208, 1202, 1209, and 2051.

- Organic Chemistry, three sem. hrs. • Must cover aliphatic and aromatic compounds with an emphasis on the biological aspects of organic chemistry. LSU course—CHEM 2060.

- Biochemistry, three sem. hrs. • Must include three sem. hrs. of biochemistry and an introduction to the nature and physiological uses of natural substances. LSU course—BIOL 2083.

- Mathematics, five sem. hrs. • Must be at the college algebra/trigonometry level or higher. LSU courses—MATH 1020/1021, 1022. Students who qualify for more advanced math may substitute MATH 1023 (5 sem. hrs.) for 1020/1021 and 1022.

- Physics, six sem. hrs. • Must be at a level for science majors and must include mechanics, heat, sound, light, electricity, magnetism, and topics in modern physics. LSU courses—PHYS 2001, 2002.

- English Composition, six sem. hrs. • Must include six sem. hrs. of English composition. LSU courses—ENGL 1001, 1002, and/or 2000.

- Speech Communications, three sem. hrs. • Must include three sem. hrs. of a public speaking or interpersonal communication course. LSU courses—CMST 2010, 2060, or 1061. LSU students in the College of Agriculture should contact his/her undergraduate academic advisor to ensure that the speech communication course taken meets the student’s degree curriculum requirements.

In selecting the remaining required courses for admission to the professional program, applicants should consider the following:

- The objective of the DVM program is to offer a well-rounded curriculum in veterinary medical education enabling the graduate to select from a wide range of professional opportunities. The selection of elective courses in the preprofessional curriculum should reflect the interests and objectives of the candidate.
Potential applicants should plan their programs with the recognition that these elective courses provide the only formal opportunity in the college years to obtain a broad general education.

- Applicants who have completed advanced preparatory courses in high school are, in all probability, qualified to complete the prerequisites in four semesters. These students are encouraged to take higher level university courses when so permitted. Applicants who are inadequately prepared may find it advantageous to complete the prerequisites requirements over a longer period.

- Although the primary objective of the applicant may be to complete the preveterinary requirements, those who have not previously obtained a baccalaureate degree are encouraged to plan for alternative career possibilities though a degree-granting program that has similar course requirements.

Several LSU curricula include all of the minimum mandatory requirements. Many other curricula that do not specify all of the requirements allow them as electives. Because not all applicants will gain admission to the School of Veterinary Medicine on the first attempt, they should continue in degree programs while making themselves more competitive in subsequent years. Some students may elect to complete a baccalaureate degree in order to pursue graduate training during the first and second summers of the professional program.

- Since applicants must take the GRE in the fall preceding application or earlier, those students following a four-semester program must complete this test only four weeks after beginning the sophomore year. Appropriate preparation and the selection of a curriculum that contributes to an acceptable score are strongly suggested. Students who are enrolled at accredited institutions other than LSU must determine that courses taken in content and quality to descriptions contained in the latest issue of the LSU General Catalog, which can be obtained upon request from the LSU Office of the University Registrar ($3 per copy). If there are any questions regarding equivalency of courses, please contact the School of Veterinary Medicine’s Student Affairs Office by e-mail (admissions@vetmed.lsu.edu) or telephone (225-578-9538).

All requirements must be completed by the end of the spring semester of the year in which admission is sought. All application materials must be received by the appropriate deadlines. Application materials received after the given deadlines will not be accepted, and will result in the applicant being removed from consideration. Please visit the School of Veterinary Medicine’s admissions Web site at www.vetmed.lsu.edu/admissions for application deadlines.

Information concerning LSU’s preveterinary medicine program is contained in this LSU General Catalog or may be obtained from the dean of the College of Agriculture.

**THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN VETERINARY MEDICINE**

The School of Veterinary Medicine offers advanced studies in a variety of contemporary biomedical sciences leading to an MS or PhD degree (graduate academic programs) and specialized advanced professional training in one or more clinical specialties of veterinary medicine (graduate professional programs). Specific research training opportunities vary in each of the three departments and are summarized below by department. All aspects of the graduate academic program are in compliance with current regulations and requirements of the LSU Graduate School. The school’s three departments have some additional distinct requirements. Graduate professional programs in some clinical sciences, pathology, and laboratory animal medicine may also require completion of a graduate degree.

**Graduate Academic Programs**

The graduate academic program in veterinary medical sciences offers both the MS and PhD degrees specializing in a variety of research areas, all requiring a thesis or dissertation.

All aspects of the graduate program in veterinary medical sciences (e.g., hours required, composition of graduate advisory committees, general and comprehensive final examinations, etc.) are in compliance with the current “General Graduate School Regulations” and “Requirements for Advanced Degrees.”

**Areas of Specialization**

Graduate degrees (as indicated in parentheses) are offered by the School of Veterinary Medicine in its three departments. These include: the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences (MS, PhD), the Department of Pathobiological Sciences (MS, PhD), and the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences (MS, PhD).