

Occupational Information

General Areas of Service

Veterinarians are highly trained medical professionals who provide for the health needs of all kinds of animals while maintaining sensitivity to human health, well-being and quality of life. The majority of veterinarians in the United States are engaged in private practice, treating small companion animals such as dogs, cats, and birds.

Other veterinarians work in a wide variety of fields relating to public health, animal disease control, environmental protection, industry, education and research. Federal government employs veterinarians to monitor communicable disease programs, conduct research, protect public health through food quality control services, and deal with free-ranging wildlife, laboratory animals and other populations of animals covered by federal laws.

State governments employ veterinarians whose duties include enforcing the regulations established to protect both animals and humans. These duties include the areas of meat and poultry inspection, public health, and animal control.

Other employers are local governments, colleges of veterinary medicine, medical schools, research laboratories, animal food companies, and pharmaceutical companies. A few of the largest zoos employ full-time veterinarians.

Veterinarians now hold about 60,000 jobs. About one third are self-employed and most of the others are salaried employees of a practice. The Federal Government employs about 2,800.

Professional Training

All States and the District of Columbia require that veterinarians be licensed. To obtain a license, applicants must have a doctorate degree in veterinary medicine and pass a State board examination. Most states allow an individual to apply for licensure upon receiving the doctorate degree without a residency and without completing a prescribed number of hours of practice. The state of California requires passage of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE), in addition to the state exam (California State Board, or CSB).

The doctorate degree requires a minimum of 6 years of study consisting of at least 2 years of pre-veterinary study and 4 years of veterinary medicine. Most successful applicants have completed 4 years of college.

Job Outlook

There is a growing demand for sophisticated veterinary services. Specialized opportunities in nutrition, dentistry, behavior, and other services exist. Society's concerns about food safety and health mean an increase in positions in food animal health, zoonotic disease control, and preventive medicine. Biotechnology positions are available for veterinary experts in genetics, pathology, and toxicology. Laboratory animal specialists are needed in areas related to animal and human health.

Earnings

Salaries are typically based on career options, time since graduation, and job location. According to a survey conducted by UC Davis of recent graduates, the mean base salary for a

first-year associate veterinarian is between \$62,086 to \$71,462. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a mean annual wage of \$90,110 for veterinarians.

Admission Requirements for UC Davis

1. Minimum Credits Required

Applicants must have completed 108 quarter hours in specified courses listed below; however, most applicants will have completed a baccalaureate degree.

2. Admission Tests

All applicants are required to take two Graduate Record Examinations (GRE): (1) the General Aptitude Test and (2) the Subject Test in Biology no later than the October administration of the year prior to desired admission. The combined score for the two tests should be at least 80.

3. GPA

The published minimum GPA in both the sciences and accumulated college course work is 2.5; however, in practice the applicant needs at least a 3.3 for a realistic chance of acceptance.

4. Residence

Residents of the State of California will be given priority for admission; however, a few highly qualified non-resident students are considered each year.

5. Criteria Used for Selection

1. GPA and GRE scores (50-60%)
2. Narrative (5-20%)
3. Letters of Evaluation (5-20%)
4. Interview (0-20%)

6. Veterinary and Animal Experience

Because veterinary medicine is an animal-oriented profession, substantial experience (a minimum of 180 clock hours) with animals is required. This may include the care, knowledge and experience gained working in a veterinary, agricultural, research and/or biomedical setting.

7. Specific Course Requirements

The following courses must be completed at least one year before you plan begin your Program

- General Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Biological Foundations
- General Physics
- Genetics
- Biochemistry
- Systems Physiology
- English (12 hours) may include Speech.
- Humanities and Social Science (12 hours)
- Statistics

At PUC a major in biology fits well with pre-veterinary medicine. Students interested in this program should request a Curriculum Guide Sheet for Biology, B.S. Be sure to include BIOL CHEM 481 and 482 (Biochemistry I and II) as electives to meet UCD requirements. Majors other than Biology can also be chosen.

For More Information

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