

# Parents: How to Help Your College Student

As a parent of a prospective veterinary student, you may be wondering what you can do to help your student prepare to apply for veterinary school. Below are some tips that can help you prepare your student.

## Academics

Academics are an important part of the application process. You can help your student in the following ways:

- Encourage your student to major in an area that he/she finds interesting. The UF College of Veterinary Medicine does not require a Biology or Pre-Vet Major in order to be eligible!
- Encourage your student to visit with pre-vet or pre-health advisors on campus to help them meet pre-requisites and find resources to better prepare themselves.
- Remind your student to visit professors' office hours and develop mentoring relationships with faculty members.
- Help your student find prep materials and resources for the Graduate Record Exam ([www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre)).
- Have your student explore the resources on the AAVMC website ([www.aavmc.org](http://www.aavmc.org)), where they will eventually submit their VMCAS application.
- Be supportive. Listen to your student and be a positive motivator.

## Experience

Veterinary experience is one component of an application, but other types of experiences are valuable as well.

- Advise your student to foster hobbies and interests – even those outside of veterinary medicine.
- Encourage your student to participate in community service work.
- Recommend that your student join the Pre-Veterinary Club at their undergraduate institution, which can provide resources and a supportive community.
- Tell your students to look for opportunities to meet and work with veterinarians. These opportunities may also exist outside of veterinary clinics: in research labs, on military bases, and in government facilities.
- Encourage your student to seek new and different experiences outside of his or her comfort zone.
- Have your student consider a summer job between semesters, to develop customer service skills and learn to work with supervisors and coworkers.

## Professional Development

Professionalism and maturity will help your student succeed regardless of the profession entered.

- Advise your student to practice interviewing. Mock interviews will help your student feel confident when interviewing for veterinary school and for future jobs.
- Proofread essays and resumes. Helping your student to develop well-written, professional pieces of communication will be valuable.
- Encourage your student to take ownership for their actions and decisions. Be prepared to step back to allow them to reach out to potential employers, professors, and veterinarians. Learning to make inquiries and take responsibility for their own future is important for professional development.
- Advise your student to be aware of their public image. Social media accounts, voicemail recordings, and email addresses should be kept professional.

