

Ontario Veterinary College
Essential Skills and Abilities Required for the Study of Veterinary Medicine
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The Ontario Veterinary College is responsible to society to provide a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program such that graduates have the knowledge, skills, professional behaviours, and attitudes necessary to enter the supervised practice of veterinary medicine in Canada. Graduates must be able to diagnose and manage health problems and provide comprehensive, compassionate care to their patients. For this reason, students in the DVM program must possess the cognitive, communication, sensory, motor, and social skills necessary to examine patients, and to interview and counsel clients, and to competently complete certain technical procedures in a reasonable time, while ensuring patient and personal safety. In addition to obtaining a DVM degree, an individual must pass the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination and any appropriate jurisdictional examination in order to practice veterinary medicine in Canada.

All students must have the required skills and abilities described in the section on Technical Standards. All potential applicants are expected to review this document to assess their ability to meet these standards. Because of the comprehensive, additive, and integrative nature of the DVM curriculum, students are generally expected to complete the DVM degree on a full-time, continuous basis within four years. This policy does not preclude individuals with disabilities. Please see the section titled "Students with Disabilities" for further information

Technical Standards for Students in the DVM Program

A candidate for the DVM degree must demonstrate the following abilities:

Observation

A student must be able to participate in learning situations that require skills in observation. In particular, a student must be able to accurately observe a patient and acquire visual, auditory, and tactile information.

Communication

A student must be sufficiently able to speak, hear, and observe patients and clients in order to effectively and efficiently elicit information, describe activity and posture and perceive non-verbal communication. A student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with clients and any member of the veterinary health care team. A student must also be able to summarize coherently a patient's condition and management plan verbally and in writing.

Motor

A student must demonstrate sufficient motor function to safely perform a physical examination on a patient, including palpation, auscultation and percussion. The examination must be done independently and in a timely

fashion. A student must be able to use common diagnostic aids or instruments either directly or in an adaptive form (e.g. stethoscope, otoscope, and ophthalmoscope). A student must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general and emergency medical care to patients in laboratory, industrial, and practice settings.

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

A student must demonstrate the cognitive skills and memory necessary to measure, calculate, and reason in order to analyze, integrate and synthesize information. In addition, the student must be able to comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships. All of these problem-solving activities must be done in a timely fashion.

Behavioural and Social Attributes

A student must consistently manage the intellectual changes of the program. The application of good judgment and the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients are necessary. The development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with clients and other members of the veterinary health care team are also required. The student must be able to tolerate the physical, emotional, and mental demands of the program and function effectively under stress. Adaptability to changing environments and the ability to function in the face of uncertainties that are inherent in the care of patients are both necessary. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that veterinarians must demonstrate and are expected qualities of students.

Students with Disabilities

Disability is defined by Section 10 (1) of the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Ontario Veterinary College and the University of Guelph are committed to facilitating the integration of students with disabilities into the University community. Each student with a disability is entitled to reasonable accommodation that will assist her/him to meet the standards. Reasonable accommodation will be made to facilitate a student's progress. However, such accommodation cannot compromise personal or patient safety and well-being. Reasonable accommodation may require members of the University community to exercise creativity and flexibility in responding to the needs of students with disabilities while maintaining the academic and technical standards of the DVM program. The student with a disability must be able to demonstrate the knowledge and perform the necessary skills independently. There are a few circumstances in which an intermediary may be appropriate. However, no disability can be accommodated if the intermediary has to provide cognitive support, substitute for cognitive skills, perform a physical examination, and/or in any way supplement clinical judgment. The appropriateness of an intermediary will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Because of the comprehensive, additive, and integrative nature of the DVM curriculum, students are generally expected to complete the DVM degree on a full-time, continuous basis within four years. Students with a

disability may be granted an extension of time within which to complete the DVM program. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

This policy acknowledges that central to the success of a student with a disability in completing the DVM program is her/his responsibility to demonstrate self-reliance and to identify needs requiring accommodation in a timely fashion. Students who require disability-related accommodation involving application criteria or procedure are responsible for notifying the Admissions Office, University of Guelph. Inquiries about specific disability-related accommodations at the University should be directed to the Centre for Students with Disabilities, University of Guelph.

The University of Guelph and the Ontario Veterinary College thank the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine for permission to adapt the above document from the source document 'Essential Skills and Abilities Required for the Study of Medicine'.